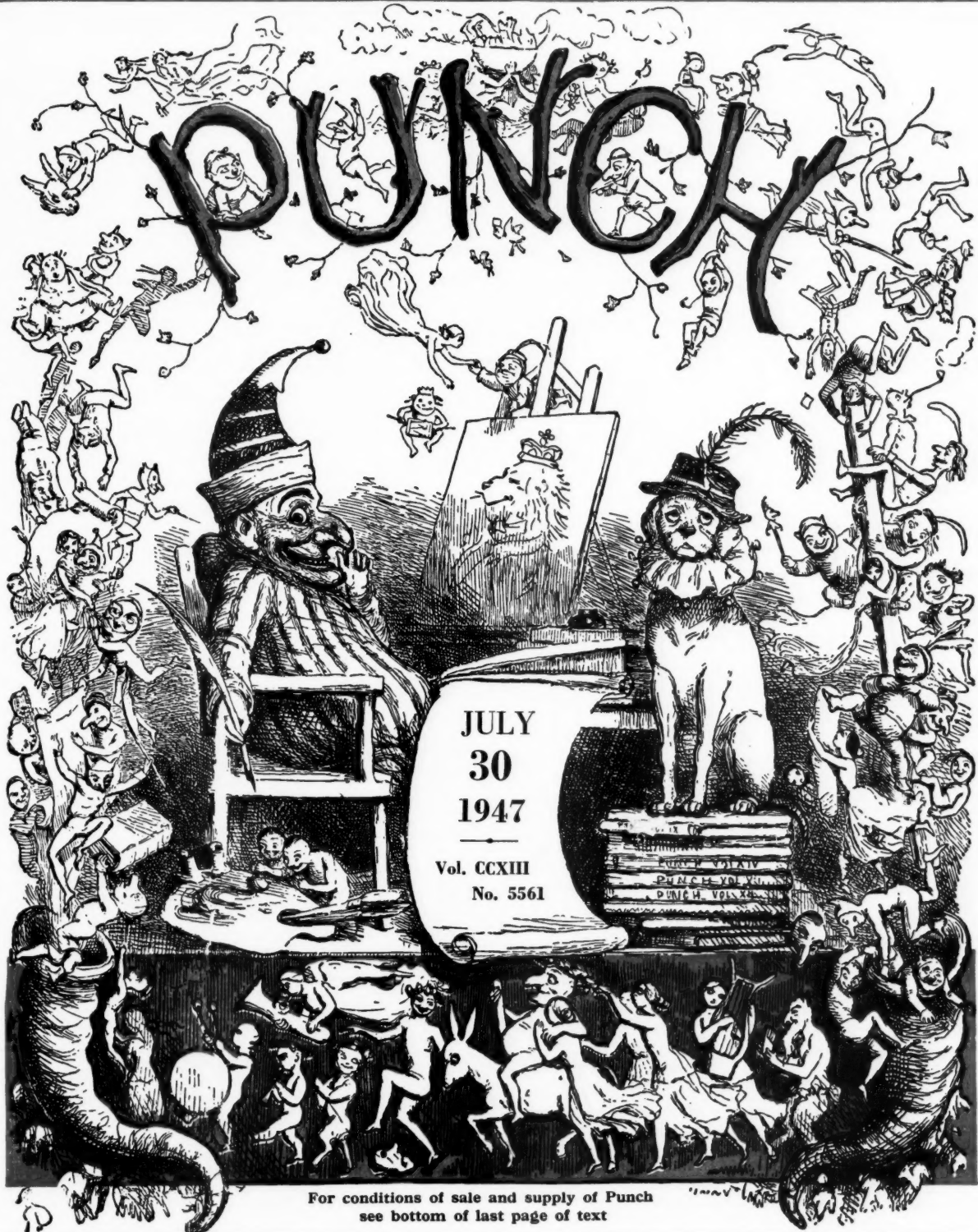


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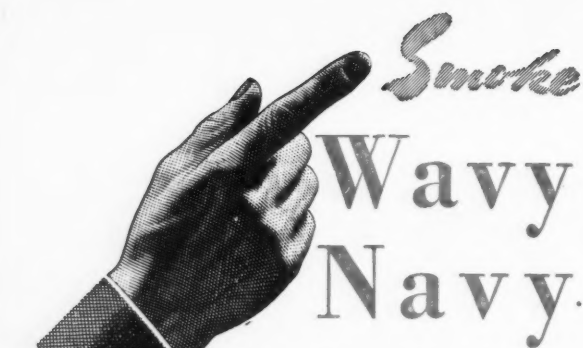
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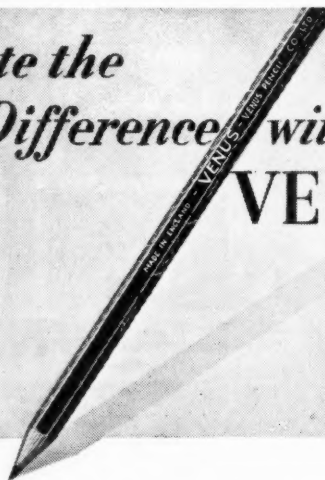


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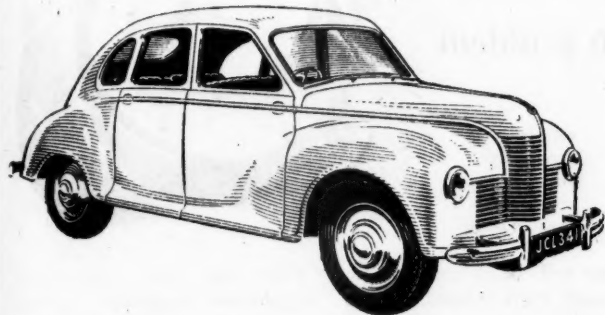
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"I wasn't in the Army, Sir."

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"Not me, Sir. I was on essential work — bus conducting. Will you be drinking something Sir?"

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"Why ever not?"

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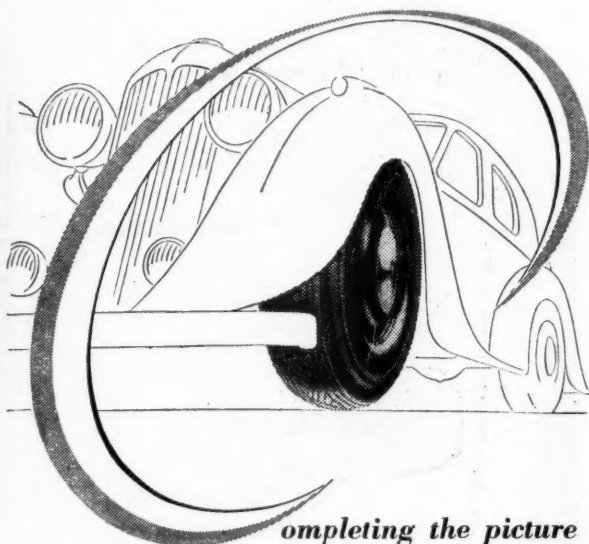
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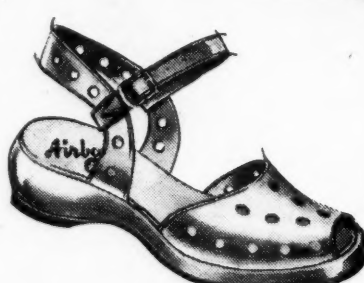
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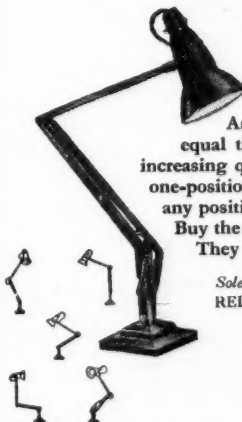
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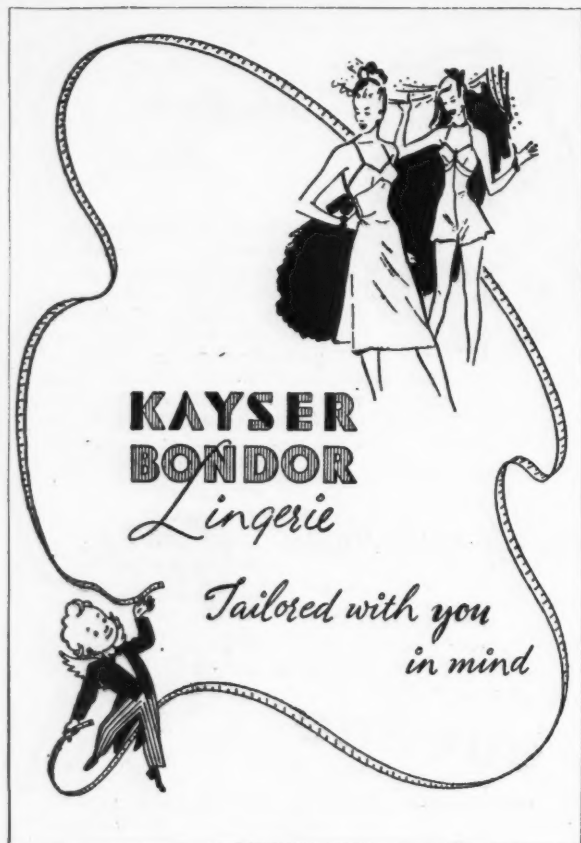
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*In London?
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Are you sure...?*

It's hard to realise, till something brings it home to you, how much the world has shrunk. On Monday a man's in West Africa; on Tuesday, phones from London that he's catching the next train down! Between New York and Hong Kong, Cairo and Auckland, there's scarcely one of us out in the world today who can't be home in less than a week — by Speedbird.

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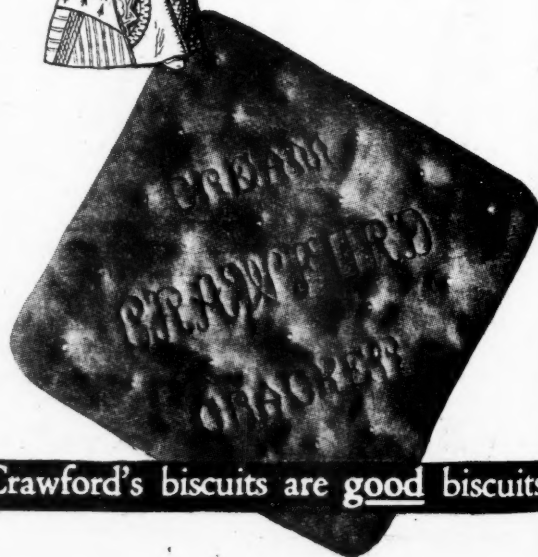
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"What is that?" shouted the Queen. "It's a Crawford's Cream Cracker, your majesty," said Alice. "Off with its head!" screamed the Queen. And Alice politely bit the biscuit in half. "Deliciously crisp," said Alice. "Don't talk with your mouth full!" roared the Queen.



Crawford's biscuits are good biscuits



PUNCH

Or

The London Charivari



Vol. CCXIII No. 5561

July 30 1947

Charivaria

A MOTORIST complains that some town councils are far too complacent about the condition of roads in their areas. All we can say is that our own local authorities seem willing enough to pick holes in ours.

"What is Britain coming to?" queries a columnist. A welcome departure; lots of people have been asking when.

Two hundred men and women employed in a sardine-tinning factory are to go on a day's outing to see the fish brought in by boats. A railway compartment has been reserved for them.

A robbery recently occurred at a post office. A novel feature of the affair was that a jemmy was used instead of somebody else's savings book.

"For Sale. The complete bones of three elephants. Offers invited." Advt. in Calcutta "Statesman." No dogs.

A Kent fruit-grower says that last year dogs in his orchard jumped up and snatched apples from the trees. The dogs say that people who put ridiculous stories like this about ought to be muzzled.

"An old thrill is recaptured when one stands once again on the deck of a ship and watches the sharp prow ploughing the waves," says a holiday-maker. Experienced travellers stand at the blunt end to see if the furrow is straight.

Et Ego in Arcadia Scripsi.

"Fountain pen found under nut tree. Apply —." Advt. in "Worcester Evening News."

Daredevil
"Free-lance Journalist at liberty; knowledge of typing and shorthand; go anywhere on Isle of Man." Advt. in "Isle of Man Times."

The recent cut in newsprint, we are told, will put a stop to the battle of net sales. It is rumoured, however, that one enterprising daily may publish each week what its circulation should have been.

Members of a brass band are appealing for clothing coupons as their uniforms have become too tight. They say they are tired of the familiar strains.



A Battle Piece

*"ALONE stood brave Horatius
But constant still in mind,
Thrice thirty thousand foes before
And the broad flood behind."*

He is doing this in the National Gallery now, just on your right as you go into the room which houses the pictures from the Dulwich Collection. People are telling me to come and look at the Murillos. I shall certainly do so. I shall also examine the Rembrandts, the Gainsboroughs, the Reubens, the Cuyps. But let me look at Horatius first. He was my earliest hero. His memory can never be effaced. At the age of seven, I think, I could—and did—recite the whole poem about him as fluently as its author at the same age recited the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. I had formed a picture in my mind of Horatius at the Bridge. It was, I think, Macaulay's. It was certainly not Charles Le Brun's. This great Frenchman is probably more important in the history of Art than passionately admired at the present day. He employed the grand allegorical manner and this is said to be one of his early works. I think also it has been thoroughly cleaned. Whatever an art critic may say about it I find that it sheds for me a new light on the Roman hero who held the bridge—alone.

Loneliness must always be a relative term in a battle, but Horatius is not much more alone in this picture than he would have been on the platform of a city station or Waterloo at the peak of the rush hour. We may discount the pile of dead or moribund Tuscans at his feet. They obviously had to be there. Not seen in my former mental vision was the armoured goddess poised in the air behind him, and holding out a bright green laurel wreath to symbolize, I take it, immortal fame. Not seen was the stout infant at her side with a torch that seems likely to burn the hero's back. It would be tempting to identify this goddess with Venus, who had the destiny of Rome much at heart; for in that case the infant could be no other than Eros, her son (pronounced as in coast erosion), and begotten, as some say, by Mars. But she may be merely Victory, or the spirit of Rome herself. A backward movement of the hero's arm such as would have been needed to drive his good sword a hand-breadth out behind a Tuscan's head would have been greatly impeded by these two aerial allies.

But still more unseen in my vision is the large brown naked figure of a man, nearest to the spectator, with a huge urn or cauldron, a wreath on his head, and what appears to be a dog (or can it be a wolf) at his side.

Him I identify without possibility of error as Father Tiber. He is the genius of the stream—

*"But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home,
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome."*

So Macaulay. In Le Brun's picture mere politeness would have demanded a few words of conversation with this big brown man. Herminius and Spurius Lartius have already darted back. They did not in Le Brun's picture have far to dart. His whole conception of space differs entirely from that of the English historian and ballad-monger. A strong dart would, I think, have taken Horatius over without using the bridge which is being destroyed by two men with crowbars just behind him, and though the river may be rolling by the towers of Rome, the river-god himself does not so much roll as loll. Ancient

Rome, which is partly in brown symbolical ruins, can almost be touched with a spear. Horatius is dressed in red with black armour and blue knee-length trousers. Several of the dead but gaily-dressed Lucumos who have tasted the Roman cheer do not seem to have bothered to wear armour at all. The necessity of indicating the Tuscan host on the extreme left, as well as the Roman garrison on the extreme right, further detracts from the solitariness of our hero. There are two horses. I like to think that the one on the left belongs to false Sextus who wrought the deed of shame at Glyndebourne and elsewhere, and that the one on the right is Black Auster, ridden by Herminius at the battle of Lake Regillus, and (after its owner's death) by the dictator Aulus. But this we shall probably never know. I fail to identify the Etruscan King.

*"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
'And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before."*

In Le Brun's picture Father Tiber could have put him in the cauldron and tossed him over with one hand.

On thinking it over I find that my vision of Horatius will always be affected in future by this painting, and that Macaulay's description, whether or no it is nearer to the original Latin legend has begun to fade away.

There is much to be said for the seventeenth-century manner of Le Brun. A picture by him of England after Dunkirk would have shown Britannia and Mr. Churchill standing—alone—on the white cliffs of Dover with Fame, Courage, Perseverance, Defiance and maybe Caractacus blowing trumpets in their ears, while Father Neptune reclined on the turf attended by a few Tritons and Nereids offering their words of encouragement. But not, as in the case of Horatius, any material reward:

*"They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night."*

We of course have to do what we can with the American Loan. I am now ready to look at the rest of the room.

EOVE.

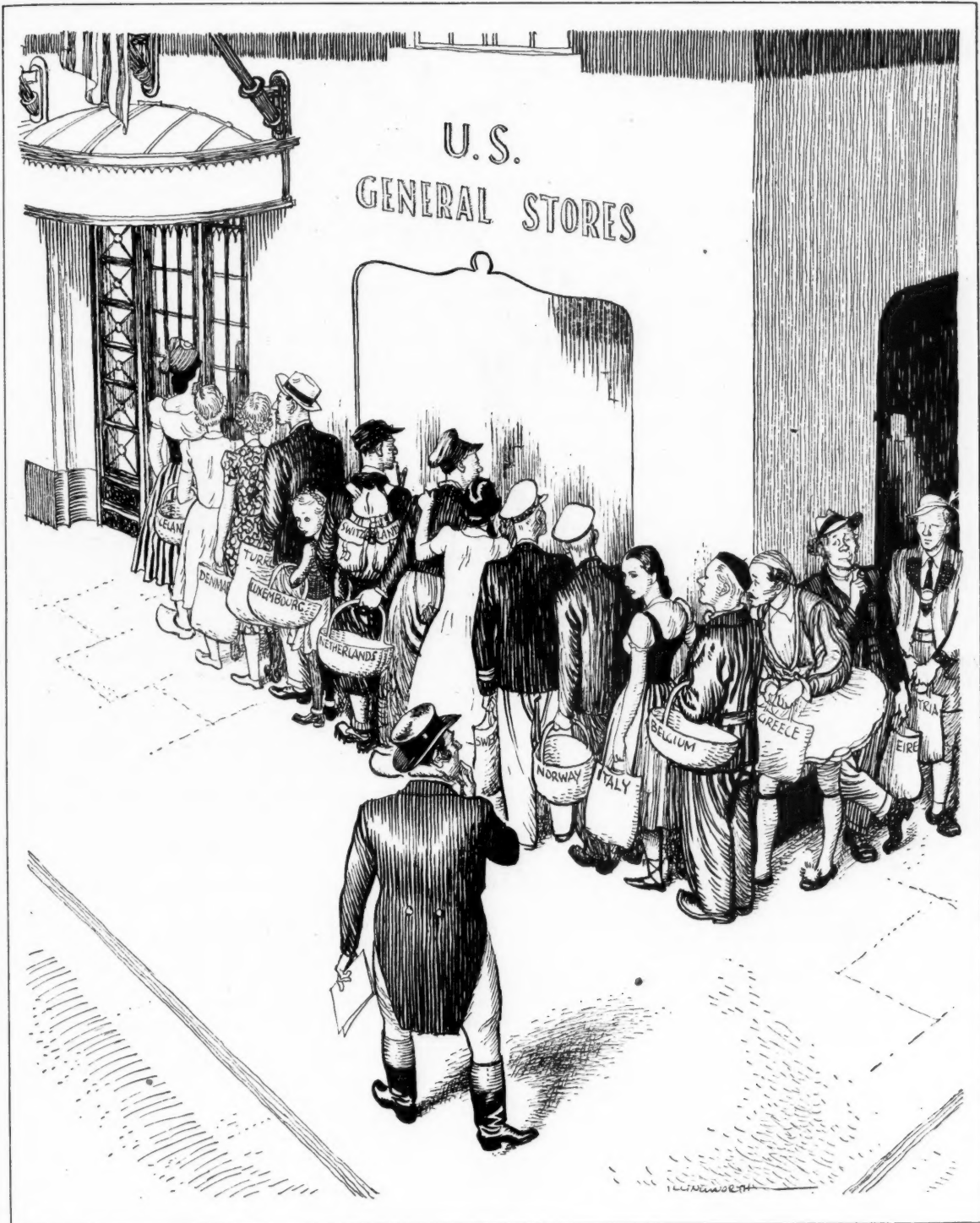
Seven Old Sailors

SEVEN old sailors, sick of the sea,
Speak of your sadness softly to me.
Fear of the funnel and hate of the helm,
Yearning for sunlight under the elm?
Dreaming of duckling, coveting cow,
Spurning the spindrift under the prow?
What of the mildew, what of the blight,
What of the frost that slays in the night?
Stumble at daybreak, deep in the mud,
Dreading the drought and draining the flood;
Land is a lover blows hot and blows cold,
Sorrowful sailors, seasick and old.

Good Work, Sarge!

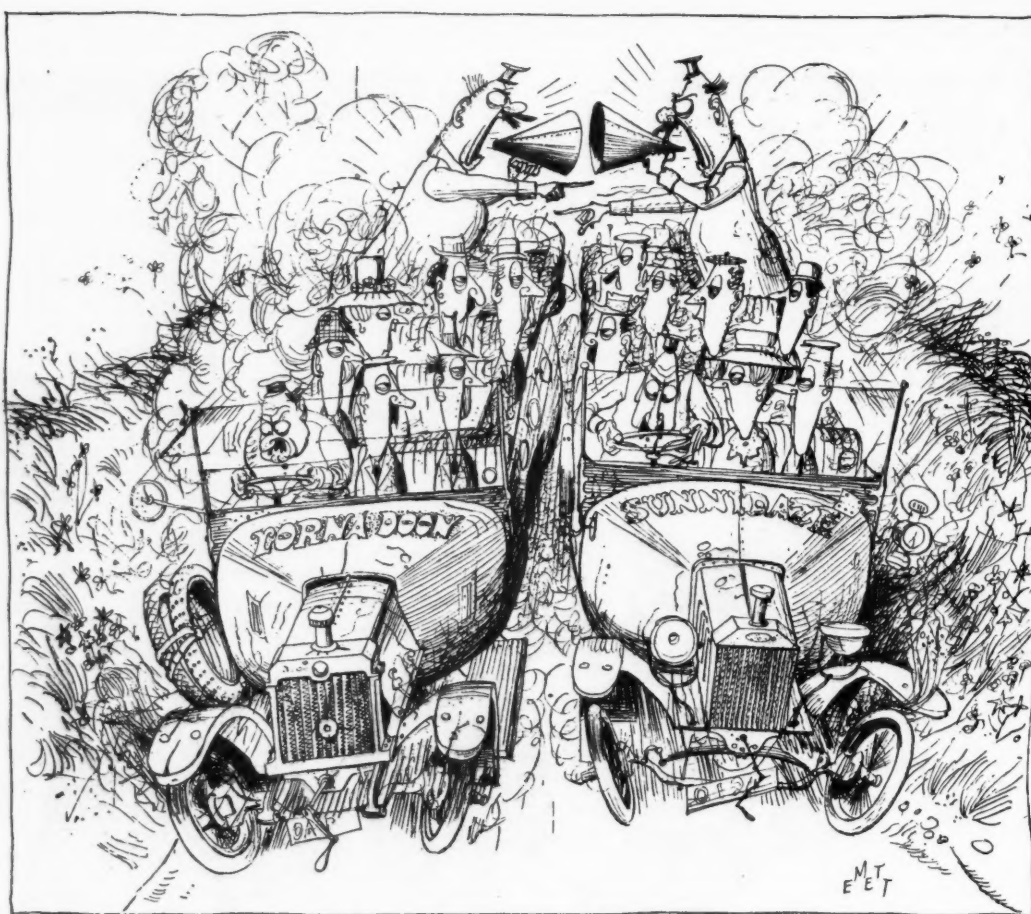
"The arts are represented by film actor Laurence Olivier, who receives the knighthood for his services to stage and films, and Dr. Alcolm, a sergeant, who received the same award for his services to music."—*Brazilian paper.*

We always knew there was a baton in his knapsack.



THE QUEUEMASTER

"I wonder where I'm going to stand."



"...and over 'ERE we 'ave a very pretty example of the evils of cut-throat competition...!"

Hi!

WITH mingled thoughts I read
to-day
Of a new taxi on the way
Of splendour hitherto unknown,
A car supreme in sheen and shine
Emitting in its streamy line
A glory all its own.

This to the casual eye may strike
The Londoner as something like,
And yet I nurse a lingering doubt
When taking, as I often do,
The deeper, contemplative view,
How it will all pan out.

E'en now the sated taximan
Proud on his ancient shandrydan
Ignores at times the would-be fare,
To lifted palm and urgent cries
He turns unweeting ears and eyes
And simply doesn't care.

But if to-day his natural pride
Survives a drear and drab outside
As blindly, deafly on he jogs
What will he be when freshly dight
He flashes past a thing of light?
Talk about swollen frogs.

He will accept the richly clad
Disdaining those whose garb is sad
As, gentle reader, mine and yours;
Enough (and rather more) for us
Wetly to wait the tardy bus,
However hard it pours.

No. In our need, when such go by,
The tattered sleeve, th' imploring cry,
We need not impotently raise,
Some veteran, at last grown meek,
Shedding his one-time blooming cheek,
Will bear us on our ways.

DUM-DUM.

Bowled A. Spiv . . . 0.

THEY asked me, deferentially enough, to define a spiv. The question is not without interest. Out of a hundred who use the word perhaps one has a clear mental picture of what it means, and the chances are that even that picture is wrong; at any rate no two men seem to have the same picture. But it is not a question to put to a man who is waiting to go in to bat. I pointed this out.

"When a man has his pads on," I said, "he must relax. His faculties must be at rest. He must step to the wicket, when his time comes, with the surface of his mind as unruffled, as innocent of distracting eddies and cross-currents, as some windless lake—"

"You aren't the only man with pads on, you know."

I saw to my astonishment that this was so.

"Jackson," I said, "why are you dressed up in this ridiculous way? I thought I was in next."

"You are. I'm next but one."

"This is the sort of attitude," I said warmly, "that robs a team of every atom of self-confidence. If we are not to trust a batsman, any batsman, to keep his end up for the few short minutes it takes to adjust a pair of leg-guards—well, where is the process to end? Tell me that. I suppose before we know where we are we shall have the next man in but two solemnly putting on—"

"I have," said Holderness.

I looked with some bitterness at his legs. They were partly concealed behind those old-fashioned open-work arrangements which appear to have been made out of the remains of a wicker chair roughly dipped in whitewash.

"Where on earth did you get those things, Holderness?"

"They are marked," he said, looking at the flaps, "'R.A.F. Biggin Hill,' followed by what might be the figure 13 or, just possibly, a 'B'."

"That would be for 'Bleriot,'" said Jackson. "Oh, Spicer!"

I had been afraid all along that Spicer could not possibly last out another over, and was not ill-prepared for the characteristic half-arm jab that had him easily caught at backward point. My sleeves were rolled up. The straps of my pads were turned in. The last knot had already been tied in the perished elastic of my batting glove. There was nothing for me to do but to arise and go.

"You ought to have a bat," said Jackson. "For the look of the thing."

I took the bat he held out to me and left them. We are not particular which bat we play with in this team; but as a matter of courtesy we like to glance at the back to make sure it is not engraved with the name of the club we are actually opposing at the time. Sometimes, when the gear is collected hurriedly at the end of a game, mistakes are made which cannot afterwards easily be rectified—unless indeed we are to face the next season with not enough bats to go round. Half-way to the wicket I remembered to glance at the back of mine. It bore the words "What is a spiv?" clearly written in capitals with some blunt instrument—possibly a pencil.

Instantly the picture of a man with padded shoulders wearing an enormous painted tie flashed into my mind. He seemed to be either driving a very

long, black car or selling elastic at a street corner, and this ambiguity confused me, so that when the umpire rather irritably shouted "Covers them both," I could not clearly determine what he meant. But I thanked him, slapped the end of my bat three times into a pit that somebody else had dug before me, and prepared to face a wiry, ginger-haired bowler said (by Spicer on his way out) to "need watching." I watched him carefully. I watched him, as it seemed, for hours. It is quite extraordinary how long a bowler can take over his walk back when you have got yourself into the batting position too early. About half-way through this ginger-haired man's desultory stroll I grew tired of my cramped position (for I crouch a little, like Jessop) and straightening up, threw a quick glance round the field and twirled the bat easily in my fingers, after the fashion of—was it Mead?

I attribute my subsequent failure almost entirely to this gesture. The wisdom or unwisdom of twirling the bat before settling down finally at the crease depends very largely, I now realize, upon what is scribbled on the back. Mead himself (if he it was) would very soon have rid himself of the mannerism, if men with the mentality of Jackson had managed to worm themselves into the Hampshire team. For myself I will only say that a clear mental picture of a man with a suitcase full of counterfeit clothing-coupons skilfully evading the attentions of a Commissioner of Inland Revenue is the worst possible defence against a bowler who definitely does something in the air. A perfect length ball that swings in very late and keeps low is at the best of times an awkward affair to deal with. Not that I shaped badly at this one. I didn't. I followed its flight through the air with the utmost concentration and stepped boldly forward to meet it with the full face of the bat. Am I to be blamed if at the last critical instant the words "Battening on the misfortunes of their country" appeared in letters of fire across my retina, and I took a wild swipe at what I now conceived to be an evil dwarfish creature with a number of Swiss watches on a tray? To say that I tried to hook a half-volley is, as I told the captain later, simply to misread the situation from start to finish.

On my way back to the pavilion, or shed, I turned over in my mind a few phrases to use on Jackson, but had hardly got further than "It isn't for myself that I mind . . ." when he passed me, bat in hand. I should have to wait, I realized, until his innings was over before I had a chance to speak to him. Judging from past experience, that ought not to be long. Meanwhile—

"Nice knock," said Holderness as I sat down.

A mental picture of extraordinary clarity flashed into my mind. "A spiv, Holderness," I said, "is not necessarily a man who wears a painted tie; nor are padded shoulders an essential part of his equipment. He is just as likely to have padded legs and no tie at all—unless that shredded thing round your middle can be so described. No, Holderness, a spiv is simply a person who battens on the misfortunes of his fellow-countrymen."

"Oh, Jackson!" cried Holderness.

"Middle stump, too," I said, rubbing my hands. H. F. E.



I Rang Up President Truman . . .

SOME time ago a Russian worker rang up President Truman and an American worker rang up Marshal Stalin. Their conversations are said to have been cordial. It would appear that the Heads of State, otherwise so inaccessible, are at the mercy of a telephone receiver.

A week later a French journalist, Gilles Lambert, decided to ring up President Truman and see for himself. Anyone can try it, as his story shows.

When Trunks answered I asked for Washington, in the United States. "Hold on, I'll put you through to the Overseas Service."

It took a long time to answer and the girl's voice sounded annoyed.

"Washington? For what time?"

"Seven o'clock Paris time, or 2 o'clock in Washington."

"What number do you want?"

"The White House."

"Is it a Government call?"

"No, a private call."

"What name do you want?"

"Truman."

"Spell it, please."

"T for Tommy, R for Robert, U for Under, M for Mary, A for Apple, N for Nobody."

"Like Truman?"

"Yes, he's the man I want."

"I'll ring you back and let you know."

She rang back in due course and informed me that I would be put through to Washington at 7 o'clock.

6 P.M. The telephone rang and a grumpy voice asked:

"Was it you who called Mr. Truman at the White House?"

"Yes."

"What do you want with Mr. Truman?"

"And who are you asking personal questions?"

"I am attached to the Transatlantic Service. And who are you? What right have you to ask for Mr. Truman? What are you going to talk about? How long will your conversation last? What is its purpose?"

I answered: "I am one of the President's closest friends. (Let's see if that works.) We met pigeon-shooting in Australia. We're bosom chums."

"You won't get Mr. Truman," he said. "One can't bother Mr. Truman like this. He's the President of the United States, you know. You won't be able to talk to him."

"You will not get Mr. Truman," he added.

"I still want my call."

Someone sniggered; the person attached to the Transatlantic Service hung up his receiver.

7 P.M. Nothing.

7.30 P.M. I rang.

"What about the call to Washington booked for 7 o'clock?"

"The call to Truman? (giggles). An hour's delay (more giggles). I'll call you back."

10.30 P.M. The phone rang. A melodious, persuasive woman's voice: "Hullo, are you the gentleman who is asking for President Truman? Are you really serious? Do you really want a private call? But, listen, perhaps on second thoughts . . ."

I stuck to my guns. She sounded overcome.

"Hold on, we are putting you through to New York."

New York. No interference on the line, only a little echo. A telephone operator's voice:

"Hello? President Truman, White House, Washington? An official call? Oh, a private call—I am afraid that's impossible."

I insisted. And for me to insist in English is no child's play. I said that it was absolutely necessary for me to speak to the President, that it was a question of the utmost importance. Heaven knows how much she understood—probably nothing at all. I asked her if she speaks French. No, but her boy-friend fought in France. All is now well. Three cheers for America. I hung on. I heard snatches of conversations, cracklings. I remained silent in distant Paris. Then I heard the voice of the New York operator talking to a man from Washington (The White House) who will have nothing to do with it. The operator said to me confidentially:

"You know, it's not easy, you must have patience—" then suddenly breaks off: "White House? Go ahead, please."

I couldn't thank her and was just getting ready to speak to Washington when a French voice loudly intervened:

"Have you finished? Finished with Washington? Then hang up, please..."

I got rid of the French voice. I got back to Washington and heard again the voice of the White House operator. It was a man. I inquired: "Can you speak French?"

"No, I am sorry. What do you want?"

"I want Mr. Truman's private secretary."

"Who is speaking, please?"

". . . Finished with Washington?"

Finished . . ." came the French voice again. I got rid of him once again.

"A citizen of France."

"O.K."

Three seconds' silence and then a woman's voice—one of the secretaries at the Presidency.

"I'm so sorry, the President never answers private calls. He has so much work. But I'll put you through to his personal secretary; hold on a minute, please."

The personal secretary knew all about me. He spoke French very badly.

"The President will be so touched by your call. I must thank you on his behalf. Good-bye, sir, and good luck to you."

He cut off very quickly. The return journey took me a second and a half. I was back in France now. The line was more jumbled than it was in America. I heard an indistinct voice:

"That's the lunatic who wanted to speak to President Truman . . ."

Contemplation of a Band

NO, I do not want to dance with you, Caroline. I do not want to dance with anyone at all this evening, thank you, everybody, very much. In spite of the insufferable heat in this dreadful place I am feeling quite well. But I do not want to dance.

I just want to sit here quietly and look at the band.

No, I did not say I wanted to listen to the band. That is indeed unavoidable. I assure you that if I wished to listen to the band I should do it from some more distant point. The bar, probably.

I said I wanted to look at them. I wish to contemplate them.

Why?

I don't know. I just do. They fascinate me.

I see that there are seven of them altogether, so this must be what is known as a seven-piece outfit. Two saxophonists, a trumpeter, a pianist, a guitarist, a drummer and a double-basser. The trumpeter stands up all the time and, on occasions, waves his arms about, so I suppose he is the leader. If this is the case then his name is Biff Bargleby.

I cannot stop to argue the point. The red and yellow lettering on the drum assures me that it is so.

DAVID LANGDON



I think that Biff Bargleby is a spiv. In fact I think that all the band, whom I presume he calls his boys, are spivs. Except the man on the double-bass. I do not think he is a spiv. He is tall and bald and mournful and he reminds me in a sort of way of Mr. Durante. He has not spoken all the evening, probably because no one ever speaks to him. Nobody ever passes him any music either, so he has to play without it. Perhaps he is sulking. Or perhaps the music doesn't make any difference, as his instrument only seems able to produce the one note. But he looks most desperately unhappy.

I think his name must be Zeke. I like Zeke.

But I do not like the man who operates the drums. He appears to be eating something, though what it is I cannot imagine, chewing-gum being unobtainable. He rolls his eyes and his head around in the most curious Anglo-Saxon attitudes, so perhaps he is eating hay, ham-sandwiches being unobtainable. He beats his instruments with very great violence, particularly when he is allowed to do a bit on his own. On these occasions his hair hangs all over his face.

He is very animal.

It is the guitarist who does the crooning and I suppose he gets paid extra for doing so. I do not care for him very much either.

The pianist, I think, is asleep. Certainly his eyes are shut and his mouth is open. He lets his head hang down during the noisy numbers and he lets it hang back in the sentimental ones. I always know which are the sentimental ones, because the lights invariably change to pink, except during the croon, when they become midnight-blue.

The two saxophonists must be very versatile. Not only do they play both the saxophone and the clarinet, but the one with the larger of the two saxophones plays the violin during the

waltzes. The other puts on a funny hat and plays the ocarina in what Biff calls the novelty numbers.

I do not think there is much that one can say about Biff himself. He is clearly very rich as he smokes cigars during the intervals and he is wearing three diamond rings on his left hand, which is the one that drives the trumpet. He appears to expend a great deal of energy when blowing. He keeps calling for clean handkerchiefs to wipe away the perspiration from his forehead and these are brought to him by a blonde lady dressed in some sort of tracing paper. Perhaps she does his laundry.

The boys are now rendering a number called "Steam Heat Sizzle," composed by some people whose names I did not quite catch. Everyone is going absolutely flat out, including Zeke, who is employing a bow, no doubt in order to rest his finger-tips. The drummer has worked himself into a state of frenzy, the saxophonists are swaying like young saplings and I think Biff is going to burst a blood-vessel. The din is terrific and . . .

But stay! Something is wrong with Zeke. He is feeling ill. His eye has become glazed and he is swallowing violently.

Is there a doctor in the house?

Zeke is dying. He has taken a deep breath, no doubt in order to make his last requests. And yet he still goes on playing. What can it all mean?

Ah! I see it now. Zeke is not dying. He is going to speak. The first words he has uttered all the evening. I must listen carefully. I must not miss a syllable.

Quiet, everybody! Zeke is going to speak now. Here it comes . . .

"Yeah!" he says.

This Week's Long Shot.
"Wanted, Moses, in good condition."
Advt. in "Penarth Time."





"Had a rotten holiday—in fact, I'm jolly thankful to get back with my seventy-five pounds intact."

D.D.T.

A Mnemonic

COME cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer
The fly in the ointment, the flea in the ear . . .
I used the word "glory"; my thoughts were astray—
"Perdition" is more what I wish to convey.
I sing, in my most uninhibited vein,
Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane.

The stuff called D.D. (to abbreviate) T.
Is no doubt as familiar to you as to me,
But I felt that you would (or I thought that you might)
Be unsure of its name, which I hope I've got right.
And this should be dinning it into your brain—
Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane.

"Why choose for your doubtfully justified task
Such a ham nineteenth-century metre?" you ask—
"Such galloping lines as by Browning were sent
So affectedly all the way Aixwards from Ghent?"
I reply, let the subject's own rhythm explain—
Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane.

Yes, that is the name its initials imply,
And whenever you give it to insects they die;
Which is just about all I can tell you before
I trot out, at the risk of becoming a bore,
For the ultimate time the familiar refrain
Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane.

But now I recall something else—half a mo—
It got into some gravy a few weeks ago;
It made people ill, but not one of them died,
Which shows the effect on the human inside
Of—wouldn't you like me to write it again?—
Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane.

R. M.

H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre concerns gardens. To the Englishman a garden is a place to do things to rather than in. He might allow a little tennis, but reading, lute-playing or silken dalliance he would reprehend. Where the Oriental is content just to sniff perfumes and think of the Absolute, Representative Government, etc., the Englishman considers a garden as raw material half-way there and a moral reproach. To me, as one who is adult to the nth, working in a garden seems a betrayal of civilized values. Weeding, for example, is mere conservation, not creation, and best left to second-class intellects. A neatly-rolled lawn, like a neatly-rolled umbrella, is a sign of the card-index mentality: Himmmler was probably a confirmed roller. While fanatics dig through the faery loveliness of their pleasaunces until they come to water, slugs and clay, attractive personalities look up, not down. The wind, the sun, the tops of growing things are good enough for them. Liking to see stars rather than mud, they are clearly on the side of the angels and hence on that of Disraeli, whose favourite flower, by the way, grew wild.

The most degraded form of horticulture is making paths. These tend to be even uglier than the kind of houses that catch Mr. Osbert Lancaster's eye. Cinders, pebbles, bits of broken pottery, badly-fitting paving stones, concrete incised with shallow lines like unbreakable toffee—anything is good enough for a path. When left to herself Nature is admirable at making her own, using such materials as moss, beechmast and pine needles; but a garden is man's protest against Nature and in his paths he asserts himself with all the crudity of parvenu power.

Behind the kind of house where much furniture polish is used one finds gardens with turf unencumbered by flowerbeds and walls with sun-kissed fruit growing on them, and in such it is easy and pleasant to read; but on new housing estates there are only low walls between gardens, or even chains, because architects are obsessed by the fear that in suburbs the inhabitants will feel they are each living in a little box and hence they try to avoid frustration by encouraging the community spirit. In fact they create so much neighbourliness that children and livestock and those in pursuit of same are constantly passing to and fro across one's sward and alfresco reading becomes impossible. It is also difficult to read in the roof gardens on the tops of stores owing to such rival attractions as palmists and the Merchant Navy Comforts Fund, even though the Babylonians lived most of the time on their roofs and presumably read clay tablets there; this must have required a high standard of physique among librarians.

One modern use of gardens is to throw them open occasionally to those who will pay large sums to charity for seeing them and much more if they park their car. Some gardens are chosen for this honour because they contain pleasing flowers and others because their owners are leaders of local life and must not be left out, when it is often necessary to fall back on such non-botanical attractions as alleged traces of early man and obscurely mottoed sundials. Of gardens which can be seen at any



"Tch-tch, that Doctor Craigie's writing again. One of these days something's going to happen!"

time my favourites are those by railway stations, which mock the Industrial Revolution as it clanks and belches by, real triumphs of Proserpine over Pluto. Some Whitehall offices have attractive window boxes and I think that more could be done by Government Departments in this line. Post offices seldom have flowers in them and they at least have no excuse, with a trellis all ready.

A curious by-product of gardens is floral tributes. In steam-heated hotel rooms visiting stars are almost smothered under banks of flowers ordered by their press agents and carried in by boys with hats like Victorian riflemen; for some reason these boys are always smaller than the bowers they carry. Little, simple children bring flowers to teacher, each clutching a wilting marigold or daisy in a grubby hand. I do not know whether this custom is general throughout the educational system. Members of "Pop" no doubt use bronze chrysanthemums or orchids.

There has always been a close connection between teaching and the world of bloom and blossom. A schoolmaster, T. E. Brown, wrote a poem about his garden, which has since made the grade into general knowledge. There seem to have been more side-shows than strict gardeners would admit, for not only was there a fringed pool but also a ferned grot. Children often make grottoes in the most peculiar places, e.g., outside Clapham Junction, and perhaps this one was made by some pupils he had to tea. There was also a rose plot, which seems a strange description, though no doubt a god-send to so costive a rhymester.

A poet who had sounder views on gardens was Lord Tennyson:

"There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass."

Obviously he was all in favour of a sweet disorder on the lawn—no nonsense for him about feverish activity with a broom. (Nothing, except fish, is less suitable for brushing than a lawn, anyhow.) While we are at this point, how

odd it is that no modern poets are made peers. Mr. Eliot, for example, has the slightly mournful dignity that would accord well with the Upper House. Perhaps, however, gardeners, holding "The Waste Land" against him, have spoilt his chances behind the scenes, and he will never be featured as Baron Eliot of Burnt Norton or Earl Eliot of East Coker.

The last literary reference I shall make is to Flecker's poem:

"... for one night or the other night
Will come the Gardener in white, and gathered
flowers are dead, Yasmin."

There are two points to notice here. The first is the accurate assumption that a gardener, immediately on arrival, would proceed to kill flowers in a busy and officious way. The second is rather puzzling: why does the gardener work at night at all? My guess is that he was a fanatic who could not leave his garden alone and got out of bed in his night-shirt—hence "in white"—and ravaged the garden without even waiting to put on his green-baize apron.



An Innocent in Britain

(Mr. Punch's special correspondent is on tour to find out how the land lies for visitors from overseas.)

VIII—How Blue Was My Chalet.

UNTIL you've seen the ceremony of the 'Penny on the Drum,' they said, "you ain't seen nothin'." So we tried to forget our fatigue and looked down from the rococo balcony upon the scenic splendours of the Viennese Ballroom. Immediately beneath us, had we been so inclined, were the "Squadronaires" with Jimmy Miller, Doreen Stephens and Billy Nichols (and a highly sensitive microphone) who pumped out sweetish music for the weaving, swerving cohort of dancers. Hundreds of Gregory Pecks and James Masons (in every known variety of sportswear) propelled hundreds of Rita Hayworths and Margaret Lockwoods (in every known variety of evening dress) over the vast quaking floor. The wheel of the realistic old water-mill revolved lazily and picturesquely, the ceiling of pendant nasturtiums writhed in the rising pockets of hot exhausted air. The bars buzzed with trade . . .



"Hi-di-bi-di-bi"

And then, from out of the night came the sound of the jungle—the rhythmic beat of the tom-tom and the shrill cries of the head-hunters. It broke through the conventional din of the ballroom and quickened every pulse. The drum-beat grew louder, the cries wilder. And louder and shriller still, until a stupefying weight of sound claimed all the senses. Suddenly the doors were thrown down and a hooting stamping army flooded the arena. They came in two by two, four by four, eight by eight, their hands on each other's hips. The dancing couples were engulfed. Now the tempo increased from a march to a jog-trot, to a gallop, to a stampede. The pandemonium was on so vast a scale that I feared for our safety and raised an arm to shield Mrs. Upscheider. One false move from the leaders, I thought, and this tumultuous energy will uproot a key pillar or crash through the thin terrestrial crust. But the danger passed.

This, then, was the grand finale of the Butlin week, the joyous get-together of the "Penny on the Drum." Or was it some nightmare version of the Pied Piper story?

"Everybody happy?"

"YE-ES!"

"Hi-di-hi-di-hi."

"Ho-DI-HO-DI-HO."

From whence came these revellers? The trail of mass hilarity had started at the "Jolly Roger," a tavern far away across the camp. At 10.30 P.M., closing-time, a cheer-leader or Redcoat had struck his drum and called for volunteers . . . From the "Jolly Roger" to the glittering Embassy Bar for more recruits . . . long lads, short lads, lean lads, fat lads, sober lads, tiddly lads . . . long lasses, short lasses . . . and at their head the pied drummer . . .

America has nothing to equal this, nothing. Mrs. Upscheider was quite certain about that. And nothing quite so shattering as the ensuing "Butlin Half-hour" when

the uproar continued with mass demonstrations of "Knees Up, Mother Brown," "Boomps-a-Daisy," and the "Lambeth Walk."

"Everybody happy?"

"YE-ES!"

"Hi-di-hi-di-hi!"

"Ho-DI-HO-DI-HO."

But this was Friday night, gaudy night at Butlin's, when the campers (3,000 of them at Clacton-on-Sea) were struggling against oppressive thoughts of the morrow—the journey home to London suburbs and the first of another fifty-one Monday mornings. This was the ultimate spasm of the spree.

A week ago, last Saturday morning, special buses brought the pale-faced Londoners from Clacton station to the concrete and chromium reception block of the "Luxury" (in large letters) holiday camp. They were greeted by a flurry of handsome uniforms and a view of the gigantic swimming pool with its fountain and 75-ft. diving-tower, an attraction set very judiciously right at the gates of the Butlin heaven. They paid up, received their Butlin badges, were assigned to their respective "houses," introduced to their housemaster, and given the keys to their chalets.

I should say that these chalets, in spite of their limitations, are a decided improvement on the back bedrooms of the average British boarding-house. True, they lack hot water, central heating, heating of any kind . . . but it is



"Ho-di-bo-di-bo"

easier, perhaps, to say that they *don't* lack a wash-basin, a chest of drawers, beds and privacy. If they were sound-proof . . . ah, well, you can't have everything.

A wash and brush-up and then to lunch in a dining-room as big, at a rough guess, as Covent Garden. The food is the standard post-war pattern, embellished with two bacon-and-egg breakfasts per week, and eaten punctually at 8 A.M., 12.30 P.M. and 6 P.M., or 9.0 A.M., 1.30 P.M. and 7.0 P.M., according to schedule. Mrs. Upscheider complained of the noise. Well, one thousand five hundred

knives and forks competing with a series of loud-speakers do cause a bit of a commotion, no doubt. But you soon get used to it.

"Everybody happy?"

"YE-ES!"

"Hi-di-hi-di-hi."

"Ho-DI-DO-DI-HO."

And after lunch a conducted tour of the camp—the gymnasium, billiard-room, sun lounge, palm court, shopping centre, theatre, tennis-courts, bowling and putting greens, children's playground . . . the attractions seem endless. And of course there is always the sea itself if you're a social misfit. All this including full membership of the Butlin Holiday Club, if you remember to sign the application form, for seven guineas a week—six guineas a week for those whose holidays are staggered violently into April or October.

"Just like going to college again, ain't it?" as one old girl from Stepney put it when Gloucester House romped away with the Knobbly Knees competition.

For most campers this holiday week began months ago with an application form that would not disgrace Whitehall—"Strike out camps not required . . ." "State relationship: husband, wife, daughter, son or friend," "Age: mark with X in the appropriate column"—and a deposit of £1 per head. No, it probably began earlier still at a giant Butlin rally in the Albert Hall. There is no off-season for members of the permanent staff: when the camps fold up for repairs and redecoration (a new coat of "Butlin Blue" all round) they hurry away on errands of recruitment, training and publicity.

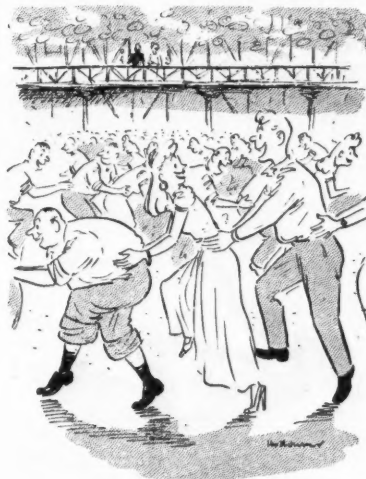
Now the long winter is done and the co-eds have been mustered on the campus—a little shy and strange at first,



Dawn on the campus

but not for long . . . "They soon found their feet and before three o'clock Uncle Percy was busy entertaining the kiddies—and the grown-ups . . . Arthur Wood was providing sweet music on the Compton organ in the ballroom; the Palm Court Trio were doing likewise in the Palm Court, and shortly afterwards there was a tea-dance going great guns . . . and nobody had the slightest cause whatever for not enjoying himself or herself to the limit. It was all to everybody's taste, and by bed-time the whole camp was just one big contented family . . ." (Official.)

"One big contented family"—that's the Butlin recipe. He plays on the gregarious instinct with the touch of a master. His cycles are "Social Cycles," twin affairs—not tandems, mark you, but contraptions on which two riders can sit abreast on terms of complete equality and great dignity. His "Radio Butlin," a chain of loud-speakers which makes its own vantage points, croons with avuncular intimacy at regular intervals throughout the day, from the Waking Song at 7.45 A.M. to Lights Out at 11.30.



Penny on the Drum

Most campers listen eagerly for the master's voice and directives and move smartly to the next segment in the continuous round of entertainment. There is no compulsion of course other than the old instinct. At the swimming pool the frogman is performing and the Aquacades are diving through blazing petrol, but there are other and older attractions on the beach and in the North Sea. The surprising and significant thing is that the pool wins every time. Come to think of it, though, a different decision would mean a rebuff for Mr. Butlin, for his enterprise was founded on a recognition of the sea's and the weather's inconstancy. Sea and weather move mysteriously and inconveniently to a time-table much too fickle for the Butlin programme. At Butlin's, as one enthusiast put it, "the very seasons stand denied." After Canute, Butlin.

"One big contented family"—yes, the chaplain, no mean mixer, is "usually to be found in the Sun Lounge after second-sitting meals," the Redcoats are miracles of tact, equanimity and conviviality, and even the scene-shifters, firemen, engineers, mechanics and commissioners will nod and grin in accordance with the social contract.

Clever men have seen Butlin's variously as a training-ground for totalitarianism, a hotbed of organized hysteria, a school for low-brows, and a den of this, that, and the other. Well, they may be right, I don't know. It is difficult to think clearly with my ears singing.

"Everybody happy?"

"YE-ES!"

"Hi-di-hi-di-hi."

"Ho-DI-HO-DI-HO."

The really interesting thing is that Mrs. Upscheider threatens to make America Butlin-conscious when she gets back. She says the idea would go over big in the States. She's telling me!

HOD



"... and Lucy, just look at the time and see if I'm sufficiently rested."

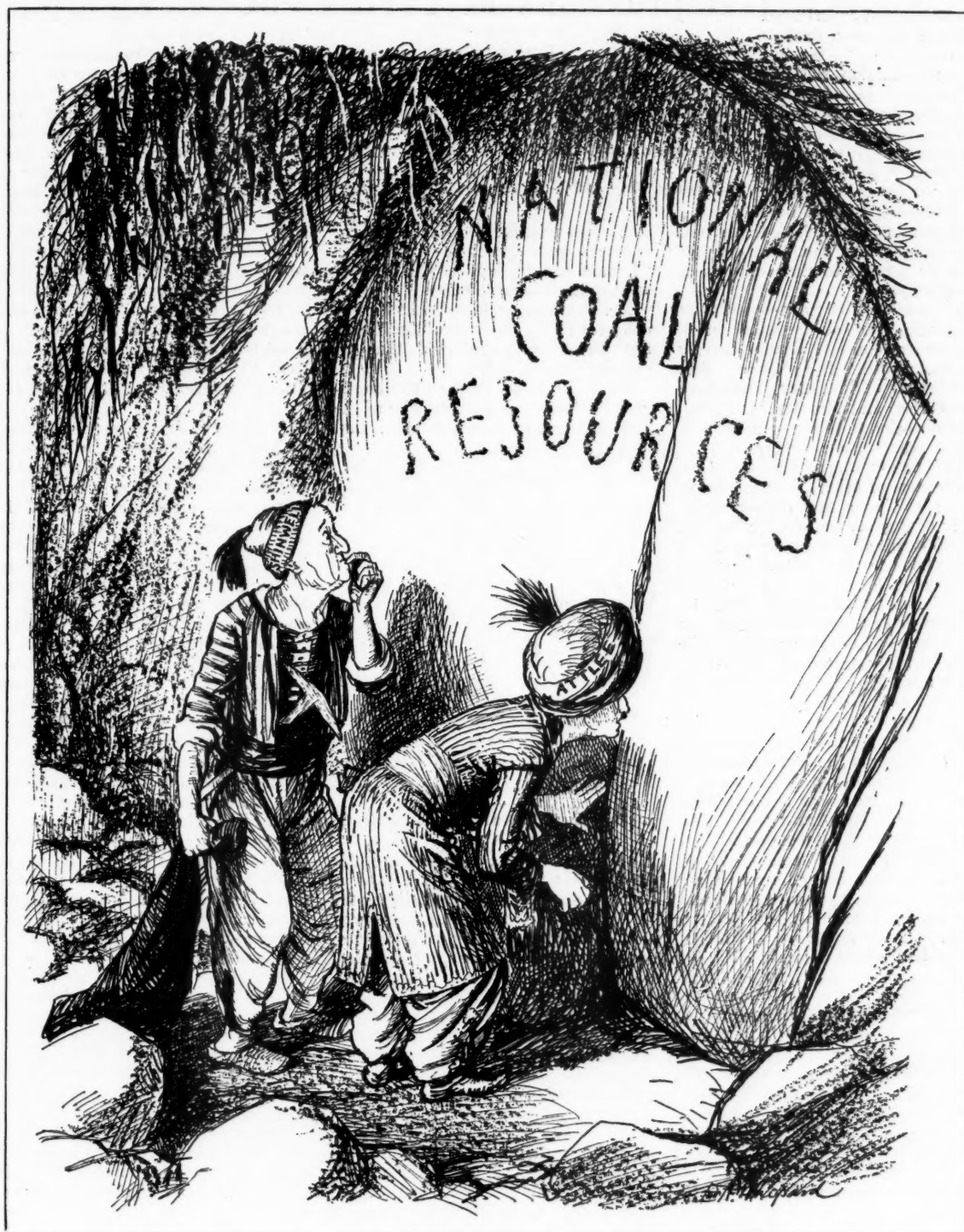
What Have They Done to Her?

WHAT have they done to her,
The girl we knew,
The sweet and simple
Child with a dimple,
And eyes true-blue?
Across the ocean
They took her, too far,
And made her a motion
Picture star.
They took her hair,
Which was rich and rare,
Like the coat of a bear,
With the sheen of tar:
Of her hair we were fond,
But they waved a wand
And made her as blonde
As the others are.
They plucked her brows,
Which were rather untidy, but
sweet,
And gave her brows like a cow's,
Quite naked but neat.

They painted her nails
A purple hue
(How often we've told her
"That wouldn't suit you".
How oft have we pressed
The ancient plea
That God knew best
What a nail should be!)
Under her eyes
They stuck with care
Hairs of a size
That never grew there.
Not even her voice could be left
alone:
They gave her a husky bronchial
tone.
For the world, it seems, will fall for a
star
Who sounds like a case of chronic
catarrh.
They gave her the rôle
Of a wicked Pole

Who had no soul,
And dressed like a gipsy.
It didn't fit her;
The people titter;
She can't be bitter,
Nor, by the way, tipsy.
"But *she* is the same," you'll say,
"For all their pains:
After the grooming
The original horse remains."
Is she the same?
I wish I knew.
There is something missing,
And something new.
She is a star,
And stars must shine.
She talks about dollars:
Her talk's not mine.
And I tell you what—
I saw her to-day.
Believe it or not,
Her eyes are grey!

A. P. H.



OPEN?

"It's there all right, if we could find the right word."

MONDAY, July 21st.—

An old and experienced politician of your scribe's acquaintance holds the unshakeable opinion that as the summer recess draws near, Members of Parliament always tend to become querulous and bad-tempered. This theory seems to be borne out by the fact that two Members who are normally notable for their patience and tolerance got into trouble to-day for outbursts foreign to their natures as hitherto seen.

Mr. Speaker (whose temperament never varies in the most extreme crises, come recess, come riot) dealt decisively with them both. The offenders were Sir WALDRON SMITHERS, Bluest of Blue Tories, and Mr. TOM DRIBERG, whose devotion to the present Government is (almost) unswerving.

Sir WALDRON, who now and then tries the patience of others, seemed, up to to-day, to have taken over Job's supply as a going concern for his own use. But this afternoon, for no visible reason, he suddenly ups and says that Mr. Speaker (of all people) is "most unfair." Mr. Speaker crisply told him that he would withdraw that statement immediately. And almost before the words had penetrated so far as the galleries Sir WALDRON withdrew not only the words but himself.

Mr. DRIBERG's little outburst came at the end of Questions, when the Prime Minister made a statement on the assassination (two days before) of a number of members of the Burma Government. Mr. ATTLEE said that the outrage was a brutal one which had met with universal condemnation. Britain would do everything possible, in spite of the outrage, to help Burma on the road to her aspirations. Because Burma was not yet a Dominion, Britain had direct responsibility for preserving her law and order, and that duty would be discharged.

Mr. DRIBERG, in quiet tones, asked Mr. ATTLEE to convey to the Burmese Government the real and deep sorrow Members on the Government side felt at the outrage. Then, still in the same quiet tones, he added that "the moral guilt for the assassinations attached less to the brutal gunmen of Rangoon than to the comfortable Conservative gentlemen here who incited U Saw to treachery."

There was a half-incredulous gasp of astonished anger. Then Mr. Speaker icily told Mr. DRIBERG that he was not entitled to make imputations of that kind, that it was a quite unnecessary imputation, that it was out of order,

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Monday, July 21st.—House of Commons: The Black Market is Inspected.

Tuesday, July 22nd.—House of Lords: Electricity. House of Commons: Staggering Statement.

Wednesday, July 23rd.—House of Commons: Sound and Fury.

Thursday, July 24th.—House of Commons: Supply.

and that reasonable Parliamentary manners were expected. He added: "I must say the honourable Member went quite outside the usual."

Mr. DRIBERG explained that he was not referring to Members of the House, but Mr. Speaker retorted that he certainly *seemed* to be.

Then the House went on to investigate the black market activities of the British forces in Germany which had



Impressions of Parliamentarians

13. Major D. W. T. Bruce (Portsmouth North)

resulted in the loss of something like £58,000,000 to the British Treasury. Like all black market dealings, it was all very complicated, and there was talk of cigarettes being used as currency, losses of dollars, of sterling, of gains by the troops beyond (as the Victorian novelists used to say) the dreams of avarice. It appeared (according to Mr. ROBERT GRIMSTON and Sir DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE, leading counsel for the prosecution of Mr. FRED BELLENGER, the War Minister) that the Minister had let out the massive truth of the £58,000,000 only in small uninformative instalments. A certain amount of acumen and arithmetical skill were needed on the part of Opposition Members to work out that grand (if that is the word) total.

Anyway, said Sir DAVID severely, the Minister ought (a) to have known about what was going on, (b) to have done something about it, and (c) to

have told the House with greater frankness what he knew and did.

Sir DAVID therefore moved that the Minister be found *Guilty*. Mr. BELLENGER, in a powerful plea from the dock, moved to insert the word "Not" in front of "*Guilty*," explaining, in effect, that soldiers would be soldiers, and that where

there was a chance for something to be made on the side—well, something would be made on the side, even if it did cost the British taxpayer a prettypenny.

And in the end the "*Not*" was duly inserted by the jury—although it could not be said to be "the verdict of them all," for the division figures were: For the Government, 239; against, 114.

TUESDAY, July 22nd.—Mr. GEORGE ISAACS, the Minister of Labour, made a statement on the Government's plans to enforce the "staggering" of working hours, to "spread the demand" for electric current and thus to avoid "shedding of the load." The House bore up bravely under this barrage of jargon, which (to do him justice) Mr. ISAACS seemed to find nearly as puzzling as did the rest of the Members.

However, it appears that employers who will not join in a general scheme of night-work will be liable to have their current supply cut. Mr. ISAACS mentioned penalties of £500 and a year in prison, but added (in that tone of sweet reasonableness which comes so naturally to him) that it was hoped that these penalties would never be used. The principle is the same as the "cheap midday fare" on the buses and trams—to induce one to travel (or work) at a time when one would rather not. But as the whole economic fate of the country may be involved in this new experiment it is not a matter that can be taken lightly.

During a subsequent debate on Scottish affairs Sir BASIL NEVEN-SPENCE gave the comforting assurance that "there was no danger of over-fishing the herring"—a new version of the old piece about there being more fish in the sea than ever came out, that mightily pleased all herring-fanciers.

Their Lordships were having a high old time with the Government's Bill which proposes to nationalize the electrical industry. As in the Commons debate a few weeks ago, there were sparks and flashes, but, on the whole, not a great deal of light.

WEDNESDAY, July 23rd.—When Mr. ERNEST BEVIN got the whole House laughing over some good, clean



"I didn't see as much of Britain as I should have liked. I only had seventy-five sesteria."

fun to-day, everybody thought the bad-temper era was over. However, as will emerge, they were wrong.

Mr. BEVIN's diverting little piece consisted of a statement that he *had* answered Question No. 18 with Question No. 9. Whereupon the entire House pointed out, fortissimo, that Question No. 9 had *not been answered*, its asker not being present. Mr. BEVIN then coolly read the prepared answer to No. 18 which began: "I will answer *this* Question and No. 9 together . . ."

Joy was unconfined, for there is nothing the House likes better than one of these little high-technical, near-incomprehensible bits of domestic comedy. Everybody slapped everybody else on the back and roared; the Two Sides of the House beamed in mutual mirth. But alas! when the business of the day came on, all this comradely stuff vanished. The business was the consideration of the numerous amendments their Lordships had made in the Transport Bill.

Mr. ALFRED BARNES, Minister of Transport, announced that on ten major issues he would ask the House to "disagree" with the Lords' amendments. That meant that he would ask for the rejection of some forty-two amendments, leaving another two hundred and forty in the Bill.

Then battle commenced. The Lords had proposed that the power to appoint executives for the nationalized transport services should be transferred from the Minister to the Transport Commission. Mr. BARNES wanted it transferred back to him. This caused Mr. HARRY STRAUSS—who has a manner of his own that is like a blue rag to the Government benches, and who argues and argues through storms of rage—to declare that there was too much patronage in the possession of the Government already, and that the transport "plums" had already been given out, or at least promised.

Mr. BARNES, flaring up, roared that there was not an atom of truth in that statement, and asked for evidence or withdrawal. For the next few minutes the opposing benches screamed at each other. Mr. DAVID KIRKWOOD, the possessor of a rich and stentorian Scottish accent, was heard above the din to be referring to his adversaries as "a crowd of cheeky beasts."

Mr. BEAUMONT, the Deputy-Speaker, mildly suggested that the debate was taking a most deplorable form—a neat piece of British understatement—and proposed a return to the proprieties.

Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN, the Minister of Health, skipped nimbly into a battle which had nothing to do with

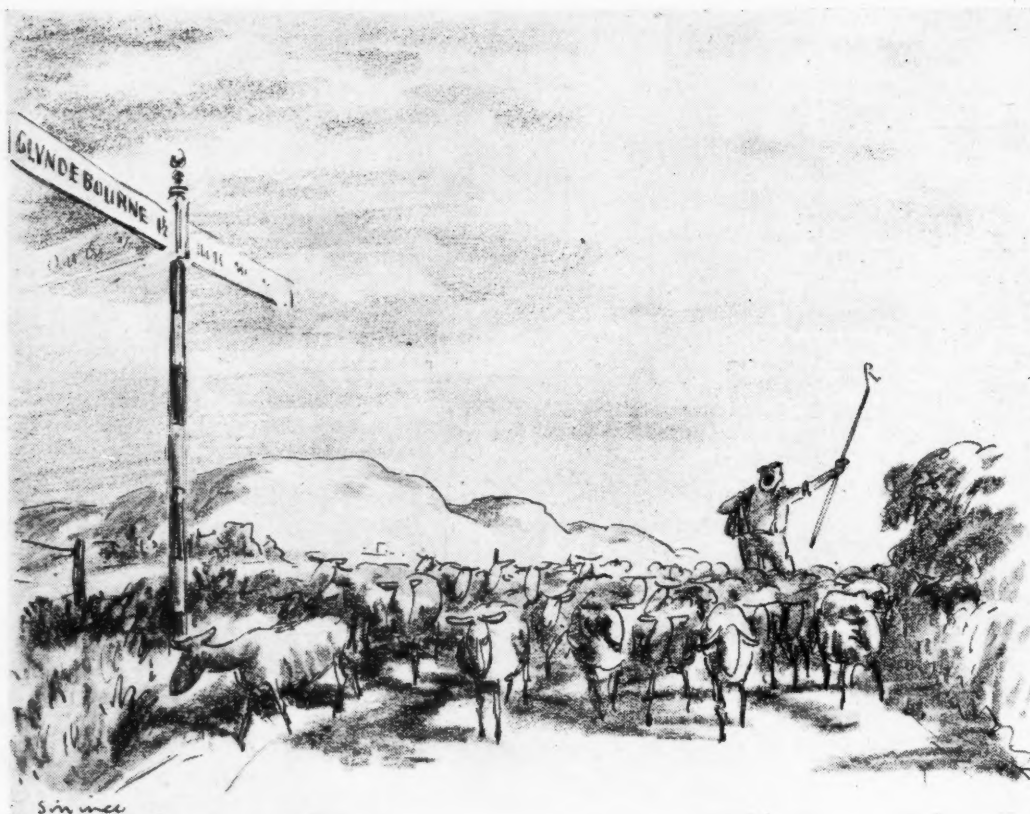
him, and the row started up again. As the tide of battle—perhaps whirlpool is a better word—fluctuated, Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, Leader of the House, swept in, and within a few minutes was deep in the fray.

Thereafter, the words "jobbery, corruption, gentlemanly Party, oh! no! yah! withdraw, order! sit down, shut up, order, withdraw," emerged recognizably at intervals from a mighty jumble of sound, in which, to put it mildly, cogent argument was difficult. Mr. STRAUSS was seen to be standing, gesticulating, and apparently speaking. But then so were a lot of other Members. All were, in the old Press phrase, "imperfectly heard."

In the end the majority of the House decided that Mr. BARNES, and not the Commission, should appoint the executives.

And so it went on for hours and hours, with temper fighting weariness for first place. Far into the night the battle raged—so far, in fact, that by the time it ended it was 11 o'clock on

THURSDAY, July 24th, and a "probing" debate on the Ministry of Supply began. The process was as jolting to the nerves as the probing a dentist does, and there were some more rows—but milder ones.



"Che farò senza Euridice . . ."

Going to France?

IF anyone seriously holds that our native literature of *tourisme*, with its dusty emphasis on the number of warm taps in the hotel and the cut price for which a chauffeur can enjoy a slither of brawn without pickles, is doing a proper job let him turn to the book of the French Club des Sans-Club, the 1947 edition of which I am happy to say I have in front of me. Here the poet, the epicurean and the realist have selflessly fused their points of view for the well-being of mankind, and the result is a work to treasure.

The Club des Sans-Club began under the protective shadow of the great Escoffier's salamander. It calls itself an "*Organisation routière du Bien-Manger et du Bien-Recevoir*," and in other words its aim is to provide an honest annual indication of how comfortably you can stay and how pleasantly you can eat and drink at each of the inns of France. All you have to do to join the Club is buy the book (330 frs. in France, 360 abroad), and

the duties of a member are equally simple. You are asked to put each innkeeper on his mettle by planking the book on the table when you sit down in his restaurant, and you are asked to send a report to the committee in Paris if you find a particular inn to be better or worse than they said. Obviously this makes touring much more fun.

In the main the Club appears to rely on these reactions from the public, but I take it there must be as well specially qualified professors about, hungry men and thirsty, on the sniff for any deterioration in M. Blanc's *poulet vallée d'Auge* and sharply on the watch for any lack of warmth in the welcoming handshake of M. Rouge.

I am not surprised to note that Sir Malcolm Campbell has this year been added to the Committee, for apart from his other qualifications a man who I calculate could fairly easily traverse the length and breadth of France in a

few hours will be of inestimable value to the cause. As I see it there must be in some secluded corner of Paris an operations room, a miniature of the notorious dive at Fighter Command, from which heavily bearded controllers can keep their fingers on the pulse of every frying-pan and chafing-dish in the country. To them comes a breathless orderly. "Radio from Sir Campbell," he says. "He has just consumed a little *dégustation* at the Hotel Point d'Interrogation at Soissons. Message reads: '*Andouillettes* not alas up to scratch stop *truites à la crème* pass stop *coq au vin de Bouzy* bang on stop M. Jaune's manner shade too cool stop quiet day to-day stop lunching Marseilles stop dining Bordeaux.'"

And now to give you some idea of the manifold charms of this little book (of which the section covering Paris and 300 kilometres around can also be bought separately, for 240 frs.). I mustn't give actual names, but the

following are straight quotations. How is this for poetry?

"Hotel —. *Les relais pittoresques sont aux amants ce que l'eau dormante est aux cygnes: le lieu de leur beauté. Or donc, si l'amour vous accompagne offrez-lui cet asile heureux dans la caresse de ses arbres: un charmant mas provençal conçu pour les aurores triomphales et les soirées roses. Et si cet amour est gourmand donnez-lui le menu soigné de l'aimable Mme. — qui se paie environ 250 frs. et s'accompagne des bons petits crus régionaux.*" I know this asile heureux well and it deserves all these word-blossoms and more; but if it were described in the laconic style of an English guide-book it could easily be mistaken for a boarding-house at Blackpool.

Or this?

"Hotel —. *Il s'élève dans une*

sauvage solitude que seul le cri des mouettes vient troubler. Il appartient à M. — qui saura vous rendre le séjour agréable avec une simple table soignée embellie de crustacés et de poissons. Rep. 125 frs. environ et vins de 100 à 300 frs."

Listen to the human note:

"Hotel —. *Il émerge de la verdure et devant lui la mer étale sa splendeur calme. Qu'il y fait bon vivre par la grâce de M. — dont l'accueil parfait se conjugue avec une table très soignée dominée par le homard grillé béarnaise et la langouste amoureuse. Pour les bonnes préparations de la carte, prenez l'anjou rosé à 250, mais le vin à 120 peut compléter les menus à 125 et 145 frs.*"

There you have it. Shelley couldn't have said it better. And this of a mountain inn draws one like a funicular:

"*Imprégné-vous d'abord sur cette belle terrasse qui regarde le lac d'un souffle d'infini, et plus prosaïquement moissonnez ensuite quelques voluptés de bouche à la table personnelle et soignée de M. —.*" *Prosaïquement, mon pied!* Who but a Frenchman, gloriously free from the Puritan hangover which even in more copious times cast its great blight upon the English kitchen, could urge you to lose no time in harvesting the voluptés de bouche?

The book has its sad spots, especially in the north. We come on such significant reports as "*Hélas! encore une maison détruite.*" and, even more pithily, "*N'existe plus.*" But there are surprisingly few of these to mar a picture which shall decorate my bedside table until I can put it to more practical use. ERIQUE.

Man Sinks Through Floor.

WHEN I returned to Stockholm's Suspension Bridges after the war all was changed. No longer the continual striving to sell a suspension bridge, or even a bit of a bridge, to every man who was foolish enough to buzz the buzzer. Oh, no, indeed not. My duty was to dissuade them, if possible, from doing anything so ill-advised.

You would not think that many people would want a suspension bridge, would you? It is not the sort of thing one puts on the front lawn and boasts to the neighbours about. There are no vest-pocket models, or utility ones that, like war-time braces and so forth, no longer suspend. Yet a surprising number of people inquired after them.

Some were most persistent—even truculent. We had one extraordinary fellow who actually went crimson about the gills and thumped on the counter when told for the twenty-seventh time that our bridge expert was "out."

The expert was a Mr. Pickersgill and he was always out. I never actually met him myself, but then I was out pretty frequently myself. However, I did remark to the boss one day that this continued non-appearance of Mr. Pickersgill had its advantages, and he looked decidedly bleak. (It afterwards transpired that Mr. P. had left the company in 1939.)

When it wasn't Mr. P. it was the Government. They had cornered the steel: they were nationalizing suspension-bridge building: they were trying to drive us out of business, and so forth. The Government was one

glorious whipping-boy. If we had been growing tomatoes or blowing beer-bottles we could have blamed the weather and the Atomic Bomb too.

The small placard stating "No Bridges To-day" had very little more effect as a deterrent than similar notices concerning cigarettes or nylons in other establishments. Still they came and said, pleadingly or pompously, "I should like a suspension bridge."

It was a war of nerves. Poor Kipperton, my colleague, quite went to pieces and accepted an order for a dozen from a very persistent little man in a tarboosh. He was fired of course.

And the week before Christmas a dear old lady came to buy one for her nephew, under the impression that it was either a sort of mechanical toy or a game of cards. She was persuaded to have a flutter in the all-night "solo" school in the Travellers' Office, and went away well content.

I understood from the start that the only way to keep the customer from coming to grips was to apply "shock tactics." An inverted "sales resistance," as it were.

On the day that I am still thinking of the buzzer buzzed and the bulldozer went into action. As he opened his mouth I said "Didn't you see the notice on the door?"

He was a soiled little man in a boiler suit. Obviously the sort that intended to erect the contraption himself.

"And do you imagine that it doesn't apply to you?"

"I rather hoped that it did."

He showed a couple of teeth in the stalls and several vacant seats in the circle.

"My dear man, you must realize that there is a world shortage of suspension bridges. Take the steel, for instance." I laughed easily. "You can't; the Government have already taken it."

"But . . ." said the little man.

"And just supposing that I accepted your order—do you imagine that you would live to see it erected? Of course not. Everyone is clamouring for suspension bridges. *We are turning orders away.* But our hands are tied."

Here I spread them on the counter and leaned over confidentially.

"Even if I could get you a bridge, as a personal favour, you understand, you couldn't erect it. You need nuts and bolts, don't you?"

"I say," said the man.

"And all our nuts and bolts are made at Wiggleswick Works. Now if you went down to see them in person . . ." (Wiggleswick was my own invention, and I gave it a fanciful address in the heart of the Black Country. No one, as far as I am aware, ever got there, and if they did they certainly never got back.)

"So you see . . ." I rounded off, opening the door and glancing at my watch, "there simply are no suspension bridges. As," I added archly, "it says on the placard."

The little man looked bewildered.

"But I don't want one. I'm answering the notice that says 'Office Cleaner Wanted.'"

CONSIDERED as a thriller, *Trespass* at the Globe connects, though the means are more mechanically contrived than one would expect from Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS; considered as a play its pattern is somewhat overloaded. He himself takes, and takes brilliantly, a little psychic shop-assistant who, dragged to a faked séance in a Welsh castle, calls up the spirit of its late master so successfully that in doing it he dies. The part is sharply dramatic and rich in those unexpected Cymric humours in which Mr. WILLIAMS excels. On the other hand, that great actress, Mme. FRANÇOISE ROSAY,

Trespass (GLOBE)—*The Nightingale* (PRINCES)—*Men Without Shadows* and *The Respectable Prostitute* (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

into the other world, any more than I could see how a young ex-soldier could possibly be baffled by a cut telephone when the severed wires were lying in front of him. Mr. LEON QUARTERMAINE is as convincing a scientist as his situation permits, Miss DAPHNE ARTHUR is good as the daughter of the house, seduced by her stepfather and terrified of his return, and Mr. RAYMOND WESTWELL adds a discreet tincture of romance; while Miss MARJORIE RHODES as a medium, Miss GLADYS HENSON as a maternal bromide and Mr. RODDY HUGHES as an unprofessionally sensitive undertaker serve up comedy with skill.

I suppose promoters of eastern entertainments must insure against occidental risks, and in the case of *The Nightingale* at Princes I imagine the underwriters will pay up cheerfully on a bottle of Chianti consumed without comment by the Emperor of China. In equity they should pay up on a good deal more, for anything less Chinese, apart from a lot of vaguely Pekinese trappings, I have seldom seen. The

Emperor, who seems to have read his Arabian Nights, goes out clad as a humble fisherman, in a very nice silk dressing-jacket from Jerming Street, on the trail of a lady with a sibylline voice whose assignment is to win him from the dynastic embraces of an also tuneful Japanese and to bring home to him the awful palpitations disturbing the great sorrowing heart of China. In this task she is assisted by an old gentleman rather hotly dressed in an eiderdown, who is said to be the Voice

of Truth. Mr. JACK HULBERT produced the show, and it has a corresponding fluency. Those who feel that expensive dresses, glamour from a gold tap and an average display of dancing and singing are enough will probably like it. Mr. KENNEDY RUSSELL's music is uneventful, Mr. MICHAEL MARTIN-HARVEY's and Mr. SAX ROHMER's book and lyrics have an over-dose of sugar and none of the exquisite simplicity of Chinese legend. Mr. JOHN WESTBROOK does all that can be done in an incongruously Nordic fashion for the Emperor, Miss MIMI BENZELL and Miss JULIE BRETTON sing adequately, Mr. MORGAN DAVIES sings well. Miss FABIA DRAKE and Mr. WILFRID WALTER are largely thrown away, Miss ROSALINE HADDON makes a spirited commère, and a refreshingly mordant note is introduced by Miss EVE LISTER.

At the Lyric, Hammersmith, adaptations of two of M. JEAN-PAUL SARTRE's shorter bombshells are produced with merciless realism by Mr. PETER BROOK. *Men Without Shadows* is a grim demonstration of what can happen to the human spirit under extreme pressure of fear and shame, the laboratory being a torture-chamber and its ante-room in Vichy France. The play is psychologically honest and much of it is highly dramatic, but M. SARTRE overdoes things when he shows us inquisitors actually at work, for the mental results of sadism are even more terrible than its physical processes. There is a fine performance by Miss MARY MORRIS as the Resistance girl, and Mr. DENIS CAREY is unbearably good as a promising sprig of the Gestapo. I am sure it is right that we should know, so far as we remotely can, what this special sort of hell was like, but I hasten to hang out the warning "NOT FOR TENDER PLANTS."

It must be some time since our stage could boast two American Senators busily framing negroes on trumped-up charges. *The Respectable Prostitute*, the second play, makes no attempt to set out the colour problem in perspective, but gives opportunities to Miss BETTY ANN DAVIES and Mr. HUGH GRIFFITH profitably seized by both.

In writing last week of *Deep Are The Roots*, at Wyndham's, I referred to "a mainly American cast." Further research shows that the leading characters were mainly recruited on this side, and I hasten to make amends to the sterling area. ERIC.



[Trespass]

STRANGE EFFECT OF THE PLAY ON THE AUTHOR

Gwan	MISS DAPHNE ARTHUR
Sariello	MR. EMLYN WILLIAMS
Dewar	MR. LEON QUARTERMAINE
Christine	MME. FRANÇOISE ROSAY

has very little scope as a widowed countess insanely anxious to bring back her husband. A simpler plot would have left room in which the foundations of the play could have been more securely dug; but though its characterization is very slight, there is no doubt about its power to make us sit up. The last scene especially keeps us tense, though I failed to understand why so cool a party of explorers should suddenly become so frightened, even if they had moved uncomfortably far

At the Ballet

BALLET Russe (COVENT GARDEN)

THE *Ballet Russe* is back in London at last. It contains many names and faces new to us, and many of those we remember are missing, but Colonel DE BASIL and his company have brought back the fire and verve that stir the blood and that we have missed for so long from ballet, though Massine gave us a few months ago our first post-war glimpse of them. They have brought back TATIANA RIABOUCHINSKA, who, when she touches the ground at all, skims its surface like a ball of thistledown; they have brought back DAVID LICHINE; and they have brought *Graduation Ball*.

The applause that greeted *Graduation Ball* on the first night was deafening. It must almost have reached the ears of ALEXANDRE BENOIS, the Grand Old Man of ballet, in his studio in Paris where, seven years ago, he made the designs for it. The audience loved the rows of schoolgirls, RIABOUCHINSKA's pigtails and blue bows, and the impishness of BARBARA LLOYD. They loved the bashful cadets and the manoeuvrings to break the ice, and everyone longed to join in the glorious romp of the waltz. And they loved the divertissements—the *Sylphide* and the *Scotsman*, the cheeky schoolgirl solo, the dance competition and all the rest. The flirtation of the *Headmistress* with the *Old General* was uproarious fun, and there was besides DAVID LICHINE's choreography and dancing, and the waltzes of JOHANN STRAUSS.

But it was BENOIS' evening. Perhaps not everyone realized it, but it was he whom they were applauding, for this eighty-year-old had transported them to his own graduation ball and lent them his ever-youthful eyes to see it. The rococo ballroom hung with royal portraits is really a STRAUSS waltz that has crystallized while it is being danced by joyous feet. And were ever maidens as fresh and beautiful as these seen at your first ball? Their dresses are enchantment and their wearers of such loveliness that you wonder if you are dreaming it all. And how you laugh at the schoolmistress! She makes you think of a dish of prunes, just like this one; and you want to come back by moonlight when the ball is over to try to find the owner of that hair-ribbon.

Paganini is a fantastic ballet to RACHMANINOFF's *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*, and is a series of episodes in the life of the great violinist. Best of all was the Florentine scene with the

peasant dances and colouring that suggests a vineyard of ripening grapes. RIABOUCHINSKA, dressed in apricot-colour, executes a brilliant dance under the spell of *Paganini's* playing of the guitar. The rest of the ballet, with its ghosts and devils and hallucinations, is less successful in spite of its striking and dramatic settings. This is due partly to weak costume-designs, partly to stretches of uninspired choreography, and partly to the sugariness of the music, which does not suggest evil, hatred, malice and the powers of darkness. There is plenty of treacle but no brimstone. The part of *Paganini* is brilliantly mimed by VLADIMIR DOKOUDOVSKY.

Les Sylphides was in the programme too—beautifully danced, particularly RIABOUCHINSKA's Prelude and the Valse of RENEE JEANMAIRE and ROMAN JASINSKY. But instead of BENOIS' beautiful and evocative setting that is CHOPIN's music, an anæmic design after COROT was used which contributed nothing at all. The dancers wore ugly wreaths of hard blue flowers on their heads, and RIETI's orchestration was noisy and heavily brassy.

This was doubly BENOIS' evening, for the décor he did and the décor he was not allowed to do were both a demonstration of his genius.

D. C. B.



"The Grand can't possibly accommodate us as guests for August, but beg to inform us they've vacancies for temporary staff."



William Sculley

"Draw in, Doris. Draw in like you would a cigarette."

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Herbert Fisher

IN *Herbert Fisher: 1865-1940* (EDWARD ARNOLD, 10/6) Mr. DAVID OGG, himself a Fellow of New College, has written a detached, concise and well-balanced biography of the late Warden of New College, whom he characterizes as "easily the most distinguished of all who had held that office since the foundation in 1379." As a history tutor Mr. Fisher was, Mr. OGG writes, one of the most effective of his generation, and was particularly quick to recognize and respond to superior intelligence in his pupils. He had also a natural aptitude for affairs, which was recognized by Lloyd George, who supported him in the reform of elementary and secondary education embodied in the Fisher Act of 1918, and found in Mr. Fisher a loyal assistant in his complex and not always happily conceived attempts to pacify Ireland in the troubled period after the first world-war. The fall of the Coalition Government put a term to Mr. Fisher's political career, and a little later he was elected Warden of New College, a post which he held till his death, not without some repining for the House of Commons. Mr. Fisher's greatest achievement, Mr. OGG holds, was his *History of Europe*, which expressed him most fully as "a normal man," one, that is, who, "while distrusting the eccentrics of his own generation, and refraining from any conduct which might place him in an unpopular minority, nevertheless accepts and applies those ideas of deceased eccentrics and minorities which have become essential parts of our social inheritance."

H. K.

People of Ch'in

The ideal way to get the youth of the world to know and like each other would be to put a girdle of youth hostels round about the earth and give every facility to *wander-vögel*. This being for the moment impossible, books like "The Portraits of the Nations" series, which depict the history and home life of foreign lands for the not-so-babyish, should serve their more modest turn well: especially if they are as well written and illustrated as Mrs. CORNELIA SPENCER's volume. *The Land of the Chinese People* (MUSEUM PRESS, 10/6) portrays the austere and classic north and the more affluent and romantic south as they were geographically predestined to their different rôles. Brief historical chapters take you from the First Man, P'an Ku, complete with dragon, phoenix and tortoise, to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and "the Soong Dynasty." The author is, from internal evidence, an American, and she handles unpleasant questions, like the Eastern impact of Western trade and teaching, with candour and good sense. Young readers will enjoy her vivid account of a whole Chinese feast. Their elders, who have seen feasts vanish on every front, will regret a country where every inch was once cultivated by hand and nobody who could claim kin with anybody was ever "insecure."

H. P. E.

By-Products

In an author's note Mr. GRAHAM GREENE makes curious apology for his *Nineteen Stories* (HEINEMANN, 8/6), saying that he is conscious of defects, that the short story is an exacting form which he has "never properly practised," and that he presents these tales "merely as the by-product of a novelist's career." From all this one might suppose that he takes his readers lightly, but, whether he does or not, there can be no doubt that he is a born and skilful story-teller. Unless you need humour, which is shown seldom (and even in the deliberately funny stories not very convincingly), or want to be made to feel happy and comfortable, you will find that most of the tales reach their own perfection. The fact that one child character dies from fear, that another, after witnessing murder and, through not understanding, gives away his greatest friend so that he could "never face life again in sixty years," that some of the adults die horrible deaths does not place Mr. GREENE among the many gloomy moderns who weary us. For each story is endowed with understanding and pity; each is stimulating because it makes us think hard.

B. E. B.

Nelson

As its title suggests, *Poseidon: A Personal Study of Admiral Lord Nelson* (SIDGWICK AND JACKSON, 15/-) is written in a picturesque style which may hold up some readers much as the youthful Nelson and his brother were held up on the occasion recounted by Mr. RENALT CAPES in a passage beginning: "The snow lay heavy in the hedges and lanes, and its soft resistance made a passage almost impossible. The two boys, leading their ponies, struggled manfully forward . . ." Is the cinema responsible for this kind of narration? These easy appeals to the visual sense are in any case becoming much too frequent in modern biography, and seem to involve a corresponding carelessness about details. On the blank page opposite Chapter I appears this striking saying: "I am going, I hope and trust, to join Nelson," attributed by Mr. CAPES to "the French Admiral Gravina who died of wounds at Trafalgar." Gravina was the Spanish admiral, and he died some months after Trafalgar at Cadiz. In the same casual spirit

Mr. CAPES in his summary of Wellington's account of his single meeting with Nelson overlooks the significant detail, clearly indicated by Wellington, that he checked Nelson in the full flow of his boasting with a remark which showed Nelson that his unknown listener was also a person of importance. Mr. CAPES, however, writes with real enthusiasm of his hero, and will give to any reader not previously acquainted with Nelson's history a sufficiently vivid idea of his predicament between Lady Nelson and Emma Hamilton.

H. K.

Re-Enter Flora.

Even the most ardent food-producer enjoys a little *Gardening for Pleasure* (BLACK, 10/6); and those who contemplate making a new pleasure garden, or refurbishing up an old one, could not enlist a more inspiring ally than Mr. GEORGE E. WHITEHEAD. The perfect garden, he insists, is made by the owner to suit the site; and everything, from the soil to that rare luxury a heated greenhouse, is discussed in his new book. Trees, shrubs, lawns, paths, even the so-seldom-appropriate rockery—but not its “niffy pets”—are displayed in detail; and there is an abundance of such practical hints and caveats as only experienced gardeners can bestow. Other experienced gardeners may question a few of them. Very pleasing dahlias, especially “collarettes,” can be grown from seed. The small old-fashioned sweet-peas stocked before the war were sweeter than the frilly ones. *Gladiolus byzantinus* is a far harderier and more entertaining species than the yellow *primulinus*. Excellent carnations can be grown, like anything else, without the stuff “the specialists packet.” On the other hand, annuals are soundly deprecated as a main-stay; you are bidden to grow your own bedding-out plants; and if anyone wants—and who doesn't?—a perfect bed of lilies of the valley, Mr. WHITEHEAD will tell him, or her, how to get it.

H. P. E.

Admiral of the Blue

When the Germans invaded Poland Rear-Admiral GEORGE P. THOMSON was on holiday in the South of France, celebrating his retirement after thirty-seven years' service in the Royal Navy. So he hurried back to see the First Lord of the Admiralty, who invited him to go to the Ministry of Information and “give Admiral Osborne a hand” with the Press Censorship. What he knew about the Press and its methods was strictly limited, but admirals are accustomed to finding themselves in strange waters, and after a short time he succeeded Admiral Osborne as Chief Press Censor and it became his job to decide hour by hour just how much war news could safely be published by the newspapers and the B.B.C. In *Blue Pencil Admiral* (SAMPSON LOW, 15/-) you may read the account of his five years in this singularly trying office. It has generally been admitted that he made a very successful job of it, using all his influence to save the Press from being unduly shackled; and he has certainly made an interesting story out of his experiences. The Silent Service has a pleasantly breezy manner when it is allowed to speak with comparative freedom, and there are plenty of amusing passages in this book. We are given one charming specimen of the propaganda leaflets which were scattered so freely over Germany in the early days of the war with the idea of undermining her morale. “A little phrase book for invaders” was its title, and it was divided into three groups—Before, During and After the Invasion. Seeing that we were very much on the defensive just then there was a cheerful impudence about these leaflets that must have annoyed the German High Command extremely.

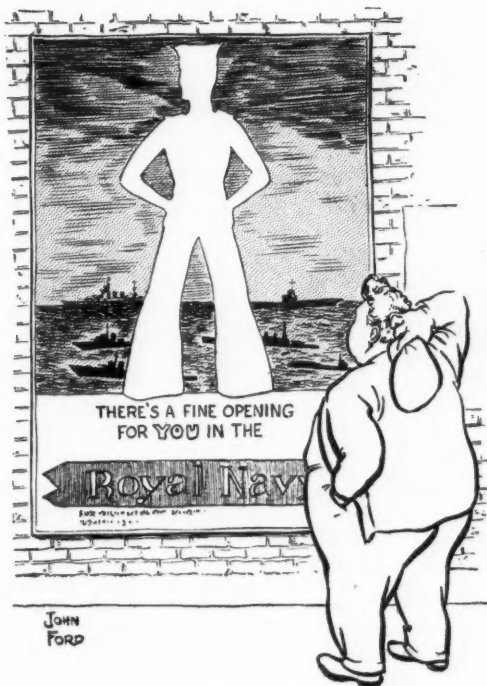
L. W.

Cook Books

FABER AND FABER heroically decline to let us lose touch with the once tangible proofs of the higher thought. *Sauces French and English* is a bright little book which will bring a bouquet of discernment to your kitchen shelf for no more than 5/-. Mr. (or it may be Miss, Mrs., or the Rev.) F. LE MESURIER is an enthusiast who disregards the lean present for the fatful future, generously lashing out with long-forgotten lubricants and keeping a decent row of bottles within comfortable reach. The instructions are thoroughly practical and can be read, as all eating-writing should be, with pleasure outweighing the sense of loss; moreover they are arranged with a logic which makes it a matter of a moment to discover the most eupptic adjunct to whatever folly you may have in mind. To this end a really remarkable chart is included; at first sight the ravings of massed bagpipes recorded for a player-piano, but at second a clear statement of the ingredients required for each of fifty-six of the classic sauces. All can be tried over without difficulty in the seclusion of one's head, pending a brighter dawn. Also recommended is *Judy's Cookery Book*, which aims, at 4/6, to instil interest and kitchen-discipline in the child of eight, and to confer a mastery over the basic dishes. Miss MURIEL GOAMAN seems a born teacher, and if only enough children of eight will absorb her principles civilization may take an upward trend somewhere about 1960.

E. O. D. K.

Lost, a Double-Fronted Shop (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 6/-) contains twenty-six articles and stories by Mr. J. BASIL BOOTHROYD, most of which first appeared in these pages. The title is that of one of the pieces included and is obviously also meant to sum up and symbolize the sort of bizarre and confusing dilemma in which the author often finds himself; but it gives no hint of his ear for dialogue, his eye for character, or the skill with which he balances an odd situation on the edge of probability.



JOHN
FORD



"And 'ow much d'you want for the oldest in'abitant over 'ere?"

Speech Day

SPEECH DAY at Marton is a long week-end, starting at about noon on Friday with the Arrival of Parents Bestowing Edible Presents and ending on Monday morning with the Departure of Parents Bestowing Edible Presents. The interval is charged, even supercharged, with entertainment, spiritual and temporal. In pursuance of the former I am now sitting on a hard seat in a hot hall (Chokers) waiting for the opening of the School Play, and in pursuance of the latter my son Goof has already—if you will condone the expression—put in the bag lunch, independent

dessert (say 1 lb. cherries), high tea, dessert (repeat 1 lb. cherries), and sundry intermediary snacks. He is therefore temporarily slaked and I am feeling quite quaint.

The Play is now well under way and I have attuned myself to the necessary small incongruities—the Capulets' gym shoes, for instance, and the fact that Lady Montague's voice has broken—when Goof whispers "Isn't Juliet smashing? She's captain of Rugger," and I find some further attunement necessary. During the interval I am

given the athletic qualifications of the whole cast and by the end of the play can readily distinguish members of School House from all other Veronese. It is with added fervour, therefore, that I applaud Romeo (S.H. and Shooting Eight) and the Nurse (S.H. and Boxing), and with due regret that I find myself saying "Juliet, Juliet, wherefore art thou Switchell's?" But transcending such partisanship is the impress of beautifully and truly spoken English on my mind, more than compensating for the impress of a stone-hard seat elsewhere.

Among the week-end activities I have forgotten to mention what, during the war, when men *were* Americans, was called Transportation. It consumes considerable time and petrol, and is rendered necessary by the fact that there is no hotel in Marton except The Crown, which no one stays at twice, but is nevertheless full of tyros learning this truth. Knowing parents, therefore, are distributed deep in the hinterland, guided by much more knowing sons to those hostleries to which Dormitory Intelligence assigns a high calory-output and an enlightened attitude towards the Food Regulations. The Chevy Arms, for instance. That is why I rise every morning of this Speech Day at 7.30, reel off the fifteen miles to Marton at some speed and reel back again with a carload of boys whose parents, they affect to believe, burn to see them at breakfast. By the end of the festival I have no petrol for months and The Chevy Arms enters, no doubt, upon a local and enduring Ramadan.

We have watched the School v. Old Boys at cricket, which is decorative and not the least embittered, we have seen the Art Exhibition and the Natural History Exhibition, the Photographic Exhibition and the Metal Workshop, which have left us admiring, footsore and dry, and have just come away from the Swimming Exhibition, which has left us ditto, ditto, and wet, both water-polo and diving being devised, I shouldn't wonder, with a view to a satisfactory amount of spectator-splashing. We have gratefully subsided on to even the familiar granite-seated chairs, this time in the Speech Room (Spokers) and are now actually engaged in the function from which the entire festive season takes its name. Juliet and the Nurse are amongst a long procession of brilliant but unfailingly modest boys who have cleared the prize-laden decks in front

of Marmaduke (the Headmaster) in preparation for the delights to come. These delights are in ascending order of potency. First there is Marmaduke's speech, an urbane review in which there is something for everyone—a deferential eulogy of the attainments of present pupils, a positively blushing gasconade on the glittering prizes captured by Old Boys, a broad-minded invitation to Democracy to share these opportunities and a gay laughing hint to parents that fees are likely to rise still further. The sober gratification evoked by this survey gives way to unconcealed enthusiasm during the recital of Greek Verse which follows. Both Bugg Major's father, on my right, and Rugg Minor's mother—especially Rugg Minor's mother—on my left are positively, well, rapt, not to say transfixed, as the noble hexameters roll on. If there is one thing Mrs. Rugg likes travelling a hundred miles to hear it is a hexameter. And if it is a Greek hexameter, her cup is full, poor lamb.

The final attraction is the singing of the School Song "Nosmetipsos nunc Laudemus" in Latin by the boys—present and Old. It has hitherto failed to be remarked that one of the great uses of the Dead Languages is to enable School Songs and Family Mottoes to be unblushingly uttered, which in broad English or daylight would raise the utterer's facial temperature to about a hundred and six. As it is we are saved from this by the fact that the Old Boys can't and the present boys anyhow wouldn't translate the succession of blatant panegyrics which the organ now triumphantly instigates, and so everyone can sing heartily or growl sheepishly in the good old British way. Patriotism is thereby proclaimed, but modestly (see above and everywhere else) wholly preserved. Good old Latin, say I.

One would have thought that the climax had now been reached and even passed, but one is reckoning without Young Sisters. To them, all that has gone before is a curtain-raiser, amusing enough but not the real thing; or, more accurately, *hors-d'œuvre*, tasty but not nutritious. What they are here for is Marmaduke's garden-party, at which it is unquestioned historical fact that a quick worker may get past seven HEAVENLY ice-creams. All that is necessary is a favourable stance, near but not too near the fount, and a disciplined, thoroughly active brother. Goove (the Young Sister) is in possession of these attributes and more, because the

friend Tinker is, in the absence of his parents, attached to our party; and no wizard ice-cream-getter has ever infiltrated into a queue than Tinker. Watch him now, two ices in either hand, twisting his way between parents, masters, grandparents, the band, rival boys, the headmaster . . . don't watch him for a bit, he has rather rubbed Marmaduke with his right upper ice and is trying to get away on all fours. Ah, here he comes, three good ices and one a little headmaster-soiled, that's all! And here comes Goof with two more! Here they come! And, by jingo, there they go!

But we must be a little security-minded and draw a veil over the full

story; if ever the facts were to become known to Marmaduke the sister Goove would be specifically excluded from all future parties in which food played any part at all. Because, apart from *x* ices, what that slight but apparently tubular frame has done to the sandwiches and the éclairs and the cakes is and must remain just nobody's business.

Goof is moved to sum the whole week-end up as "wizard," but his sister's verdict is "smashing." I myself, perhaps with petrol-coupons in mind, rather incline to the latter adjective. And, turning again to the Young Sisters, I reckon Marmaduke would be with me.



Five Hundred

LAST Saturday, for the first time since the war, I revisited Little Wobbley and renewed my acquaintance with Colonel Hogg, Johnson-Clitheroe, Entwistle, and many other old friends. The occasion was the annual cricket match between Little Wobbley and Nether Drooping, and as Nether Drooping were a man short I agreed to play for them.

Before the match started the two captains led me aside.

"Colonel Hogg," they told me, "only wants one run for his five hundred, and we have made a gentleman's agreement to let him get it. He scored his four hundred-and-ninety-ninth run at the end of June, and since then he has made a blob every time and his nerves have gone right to pieces. Not merely has he broken down completely as a batsman, but for the last few weeks his temper at home has been so unbearable that his wife has gone to stay with her sister in London, and from being a mild and tolerant J.P. on the Bench he has become a regular Judge Jeffreys. So to-day he is to be allowed to score one run."

Little Wobbley won the toss and decided to bat, and when Colonel Hogg went in on the fall of the sixth wicket had amassed the useful total of 114.

The Nether Drooping captain tossed the ball to me.

"A great bit of luck that you are playing to-day," he said courteously. "You are just the sort of bowler we need for an occasion like this."

My first ball was meant to be pitched rather short and nicely placed just wide enough of the leg stump to be easily hittable, the sort of ball that as a rule I find no difficulty whatever in bowling. Unfortunately it turned out to be one of the best balls I had ever bowled, a beautiful length, faster than I expected, and dead straight. Colonel Hogg waggled his bat in a feeble sort of way and then his middle stump fell with a sickening crash.

The umpire, after a moment's thought, signalled "no ball" and I tried again. This time I managed to pull a really bad ball out of the bag, and a child of five could have sent it hurtling to the boundary. Colonel Hogg, however, only managed to spoon it into the hands of mid-off, who clutched at it from force of habit and held it with a pleased smile until he saw that all the other fielders were looking at him reprovingly, when he dropped it with the best approach to a chagrined expression that he could assume.

It was then that a devil entered into me. Never in my life have I done the hat-trick, and here at last was my chance. It was true that owing to

the unscrupulous pact between the captains my hat-trick would not be recorded in the score-book, but I should have the inward satisfaction of knowing that I had accomplished it. Roughly the world may be divided into two classes, poor creeping hangdog devils who have never done the hat-trick, and upstanding athletic geniuses who have. Even if it meant that Colonel Hogg would send the whole population of Little Wobbley to gaol I was determined to take a wicket with my next ball.

Of course I didn't. The ball was straight and fast, and it tipped the shoulder of the Colonel's bat and went to the boundary for four. After that there was no holding the Colonel, and he carried out his bat for twenty-six, much to the irritation of the Nether Drooping captain.

"It's the highest score he has ever made," he told me with a gloomy expression.

I was puzzled. Though I am no mathematician it was difficult to see how he had amassed five hundred runs in a season if a score of twenty-six was his best.

"He hasn't scored five hundred in a season," snorted the Nether Drooping captain. "That's his total for Little Wobbley since he started playing in 1898."

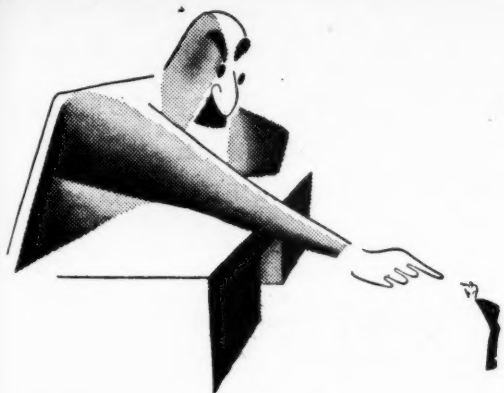


"If you want the exact words I used at the time I said 'Claude, these six-page newspapers are too good to last.'"

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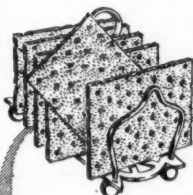
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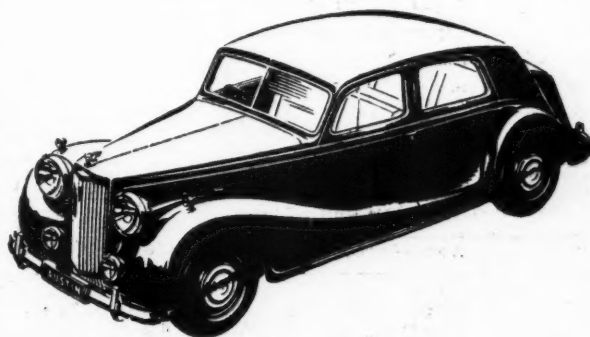
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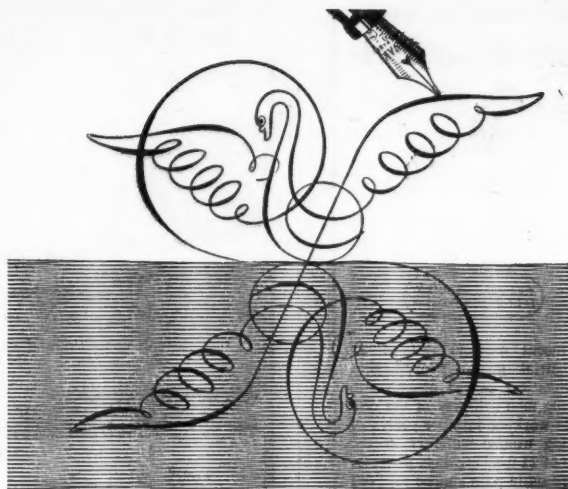
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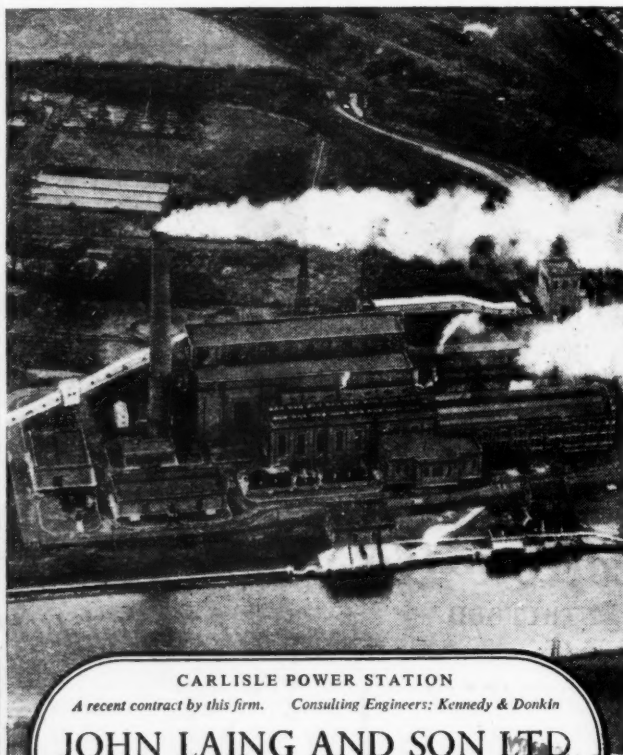
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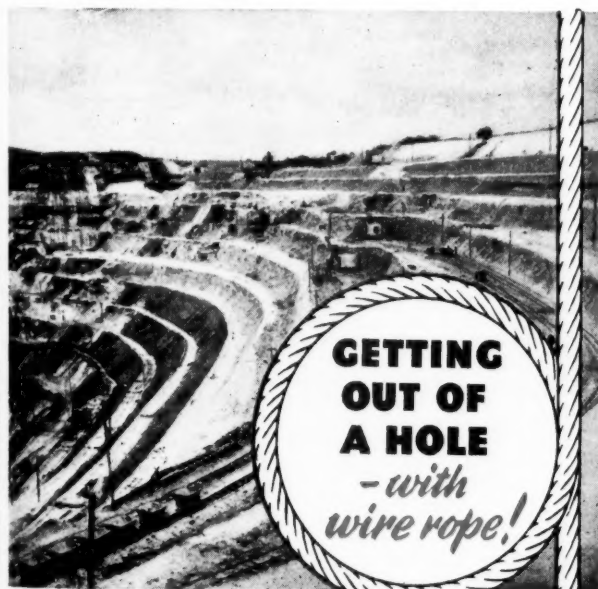
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